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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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Arab-Israeli Talks

PA Minister on Entry of Palestinian Cars to Israel

JN0701175395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking on the Good Morning Palestine program today, Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Hajj Ahmad, minister of transport and communications in the National Authority, said his ministry had reached an agreement with the Israeli authorities through the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee regarding the entry of vehicles that carry Palestinian-registered license plates into Israel as of tomorrow [8 January].

[Begin recording] [Ahmad] We have finished all the arrangements and replaced the old plates with Palestinian plates that carry new numbers and the first letter of the word Palestine. We agreed on this through the Liaison Committee with the Israeli side. However, we were surprised that the Israeli authorities did not give permits for the entry of these cars into Israel and beyond the Green Line. There was no acceptable justification at all. We adhered to the agreement and to international specifications. Even technicians from the Israeli Transport Ministry testified to the fact that we have produced a plate with excellent international specifications. The unjustifiable and unacceptable obstruction has been overcome. I was told yesterday [6 January] that as of yesterday evening or tomorrow morning, they will give permits to whoever asks for one. As you know, everyone who has a permit should change the number of the car written on the permit. Therefore, they should change the numbers on the new permits, and there is no problem.

[Unidentified correspondent] So you are saying that cars with Palestinian registration plates can enter Israel tomorrow morning?

[Ahmad] I personally drove my car this morning and the day before yesterday, which has a Palestinian registration plate...

[Correspondent, interrupting] But you are a minister, Dr. Ahmad?

[Ahmad] No, I am telling you in principle.

[Correspondent] Can ordinary citizens enter?

[Ahmad] Yes, ordinary citizens need a permit to enter beyond the Green Line, to Israel. Therefore, they must apply for a permit, as is well known. [end recording]

Israeli-Palestinian Elections Committee Meets

Palestinian Official Arrives

NC0801222595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2150 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Jan (MENA)—Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian National Authority, arrived here this evening to lead the Palestinian side to the meetings of the elections committee held jointly with Israel, which will open in Cairo tomorrow, Monday. Israel's side to the committee will be led by Brigadier General Zohar, head of the Civil Administration in the West Bank.

Speaking upon arrival, 'Urayqat stated that the committee will complete what it had started in terms of preparations for the elections in the West Bank and Gaza. He added that although the committee had gone a long way in this regard, the stepping up of the settlement activity by Israel creates an unfavorable atmosphere for the committee to complete its mission. He hoped that an agreement on Israel's withdrawal and the redeployment of its troops in the West Bank would be reached so that the elections could be held. He also hoped that tomorrow's meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres will signal the start of serious negotiations to give impetus to the peace efforts and implement the agreements concluded between the two sides.

Negotiators Hold Talks

NC1001124495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1212 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian and Israeli negotiators resumed their talks at the Israeli delegation's residence this morning. They are continuing to discuss legislative elections in the Palestinian self-rule territories and the proposed legislative council's powers and the number of its members in implementation of the Palestinian self-rule's transitional phase.

Yesterday the Palestinian delegation, led by Palestinian Local Government Minister Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, and the Israeli delegation, led by General Gadi Zohar, head of the civilian administration in the West Bank, held a session of talks at the Palestinian delegation's residence but the talks achieved no results.

Yesterday's session made no progress pending the outcome of talks held at the Erez checkpoint yesterday between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

The Palestinian delegation is adamant that the talks on legislative elections run parallel with those on the Israeli forces' redeployment outside Palestinian villages and cities. Israel rejects this notion under security pretexts, something that hampered the implementation of the Palestinian self-rule's transitional phase for over nine months.

Talks End; 'No Results' Achieved

NC0901155095 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The first meeting in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on legislative elections concluded this afternoon.

Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian National Authority, stated that the meeting achieved no results, noting that the Palestinian side presented its position on all the issues in question.

'Urayqat emphasized the need to discuss the issue of elections in parallel with the redeployment of the Israeli troops in the West bank.

The Israeli side wants to discuss nothing but the elections during this ninth round of negotiations.

Israeli Sources Note 'Secret' Talks With PLO

TA0901190395 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Senior political sources have said that the Israeli and PLO stands are now palpably closer. The sources tonight told our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen that in almost daily secret contacts, a PLO understanding for Israel's security needs was achieved. Among other things, 'Arafat is favorably considering agreeing to a partial IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from West Bank cities and to IDF troops remaining in problematic sites.

Peres, 'Arafat Agree on Passports, Prisoners

TA0901144895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the Peres-'Arafat meeting, it was agreed that Israel would recognize passports issued by the Palestinian Authority. Progress was made in the discussions on the release of male prisoners while there is an Israeli readiness to free women prisoners.

Our correspondents Shlomo Raz and Yoni Ben-Menahem report that the Peres-'Arafat started the meeting tete-a-tete and were later joined by several officials from both sides. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment prior to the elections in the territories was not discussed. It was agreed that that would be the subject of next week's meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin. Agreement was reached on various technical issues, including an Israeli readiness to assist in the establishment of an industrial park on the West Bank, to permit vehicles with Palestinian license plates to enter Israel, to ease the restrictions on men over 50 crossing from Gaza to Jericho, and to increase the number of permits given to Gazans studying on the West Bank.

Further on Agreements Reached at Erez

JN0901172395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Report 'Adil al-Za'nun by in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a joint news conference with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres following their meeting near the Erez checkpoint today, Yasir 'Arafat said the Palestinian and Israeli sides have reached agreement on the issue of the safe passageway between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and on the establishment of a Palestinian industrial area near the Erez checkpoint. He stressed the need to discuss these issues in detail.

'Arafat added: We have discussed several issues related to the implementation of the second stage of the Declaration of Principles. We should work together to surmount obstacles.

'Arafat said: We are ready to continue the road to the comprehensive peace. He stressed that he will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin next week. The two sides will discuss the issue of the Israeli occupation forces' redeployment away from the populated areas to pave the way for legislative elections and the transfer of the remaining powers to the National Authority in the West Bank.

'Arafat expressed the hope that the obstacles to the peace process will be surmounted.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said the Israeli Government has decided not to build more settlements, not to confiscate Palestinian lands, and not to exploit government funds in financing the settlements.

He added: The negotiations will take place on two tracks. On the first track in Cairo, the two sides will discuss the holding of the legislative elections and economic issues. On the second track, President 'Arafat and Prime Minister Rabin will discuss the sensitive issues, such as redeployment and the transfer of powers to the Palestinian Authority.

Minister Peres described this meeting as fruitful, and stressed the need for more time to overcome difficulties facing the implementation of the agreement.

Attending the meeting on the Palestinian sides were Planning and International Cooperation Minister Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Culture and Information Minister Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, and President 'Arafat's adviser, Nabil Abu-Rudaynah. The Israeli side include Environmental Protection Minister Yosi Sarid and Police Minister Moshe Shahal.

Sha'th on 'Arafat-Peres Meeting, Other Issues

NC1001091495 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 10 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, official in charge of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority, in Gaza, by Fawzi al-Jundi, in Cairo; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Jundi] What are the most important results of yesterday's meeting between 'Arafat and Peres?

[Sha'th] [passage omitted] Detailed talks have begun on the Israeli forces' withdrawal from Palestinian cities and villages in the West Bank. Naturally the two sides agreed to reveal no details on the issue. Peres announced that there will be no retreat from a complete implementation of the Declaration of Principles in the West Bank. Negotiations on this issue will continue at a meeting to be held late next week between Palestinian and Israeli delegations led by President 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin.

[Al-Jundi] Can we say that this meeting somewhat eased the Palestinian-Israeli crisis, which reached a peak in the past few days?

[Sha'th] We hope the implementation of what has been agreed upon will ease this tension, because talks on redeployment take time. But there are other issues that have been agreed upon. Perhaps their speedy implementation will lead to a relaxation.

On top of these issues is the issue of prisoners. For the first time since we entered Gaza and Jericho I believe there is a firm Israeli sense that the continuing detention of prisoners is a serious issue and that their release is an important Palestinian demand. I hope the situation will develop positively. [passage omitted]

[Al-Jundi] Clearly we can conclude from this conversation that yesterday's 'Arafat-Peres meeting was positive. But my question is: As a Palestinian side, did you obtain Israeli commitments through Peres regarding the expansion of the Israeli settlement policy and ending acts of violence, the latest of which were the clashes between the Israeli forces and the Palestinian police in Erez?

[Sha'th] The answer is yes to the second part of the question. As for the first part, I believe the Israeli stance remains that expressed by Peres in Cairo; they are willing to refrain from expropriating new land for settlements and building new settlements and spending government funds on existing settlements.

But they have not yet presented any clear commitment to halting the settlement policy or stopping expanding the existing settlements through nongovernmental funds. We do not care whether the funds are governmental but we seek a halt to the settlement policy. I believe this issue hampers a clear and final decision on the [word indistinct].

[Al-Jundi] Do you view the talks beginning today between the Palestinian and Israeli sides positively in light of the 'Arafat-Peres meeting?

[Sha'th] The Cairo talks deal with elections, which necessarily form an important issue. I believe we are not far from an agreement in this regard. But the elections issue remains outstanding pending agreement on Israeli withdrawal. Without withdrawal, we do not agree to hold elections under the Israeli occupation. So we are relatively close to agreement on the detainees, settlements, and elections. But this depends on an Israeli withdrawal.

[Al-Jundi] Have you talked to Peres about the recent incident in which Dr. 'Urayqat was hit near al-Khidr in Bethlehem?

[Sha'th] Yes. Undoubtedly they sense the importance we attach to halting settlement building. But let me say: This is an issue that requires continuous struggle and we need Arab and world backing. In our view the settlement policy, especially in Jerusalem, represents the peaking of the Israeli policy of annexation, which [word indistinct] all our relations with Israel over the past 47 years. Although we have obtained commitments to a partial halt to settlement building, we still insist on persistent action to halt it completely until we agree on removing these settlements in the same way settlements were removed from Egyptian Sinai.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on Self-Rule, Hamas, Peace Process

MM0901163095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Jan 95 p 5

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Salih Qallab in Gaza; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qallab] We have noted recently that there has been a security escalation in the self-rule areas and the West Bank, and some Palestinian policemen have been killed by Israeli Army units. Why this security escalation?

['Arafat] Indeed there has been an Israeli escalation and increase in tension conducted by the settlers, both officially and in practice. Some Israeli officers dissatisfied with the peace process carry out some actions aimed at torpedoing that process, as happened recently. And as is known, there are attempts to blame the Palestinians for these actions, as stated by a number of Israeli officials.

The fact is that there are influential Israeli forces representing centers of power even inside the Army. These forces are deliberately violating what has been agreed in the peace process. The examples are numerous, including the deliberate postponement of the agreed self-rule elections, the transfer of powers in the West Bank to the Palestinian National Authority [PNA; Palestinian Authority, PA], evading the question of the Israeli Army's redeployment and its evacuation in the first stage from cities and residential areas, persistence in confiscating the land and setting up new settlements or fattening the old settlements, and persistence in isolating Jerusalem and imposing a blockade on it.

[Qallab] You spoke about the existence of groups opposed to the peace process inside the Israeli Army. Do you believe that the matter has reached a situation similar to the secret army formed inside the French Army on the eve of the withdrawal from Algeria which refused to resolve the Algerian question?

['Arafat] An intelligence official said that the self-rule areas will witness something similar to the civil war that took place in Lebanon. I believe he was and is working to foment sedition, thwart the Palestinian experiment, and destroy the peace agreement. As is known, Israeli Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq, who was replaced a few days ago, openly expressed his opposition to the Oslo accord and the peace process. He made numerous statements in this connection.

I am not talking about imaginary issues. I am talking about incidents. Incidents we are experiencing daily, which are known even to the Western media. There are centers of power inside Israel and the Israeli Army. They are seeking to sabotage the peace process and continuing to violate the accords concluded between us and Israel.

[Qallab] But matters have not reached the point of seeking to topple the Israeli Government and get rid of Yitzhaq Rabin physically along the lines of what happened to General De Gaulle by the secret French Army led by General Salan?

['Arafat] Who said that? Rabin was exposed to murder threats from extremist Israel forces and centers of power. I am certain that, if matters remain unsettled, these threats will find their way to implementation one day.

[Qallab] We feel that the Israeli Government is trying to turn the Oslo accords into security accords only.

['Arafat] No, that is untrue. To be precise, it must be acknowledged that as far as Israel is concerned, the security concern is a main concern. Nevertheless, the implementation of the Oslo accords has transcended security matters and moved to the other main matters. Proof of this is that the Palestinian Authority [PA] has so far assumed numerous powers in the West Bank, including the powers concerning education, health, youth and sports, social affairs, tourism, and taxes.

True, this is not sufficient as long as the elections still have not been held as scheduled. But it cannot be said that the accords are still revolving in the security affairs circle only. However, it must be stressed that the Israelis are excessively focusing on the security aspects.

[Qallab] The question being raised now, even at the Arab level, is: Is Israel with its current Labor leadership serious about making the Oslo accords a success and implementing them?

['Arafat] Without any doubt, there are blatant Israeli violations of these accords. But on the whole, matters are moving forward. For our part, we knew from the beginning that we were not going to a wedding and that the process in which we are engaged was very difficult and involved major challenges. We must here remember that the Taba talks between the Israelis lasted for a long time, even though that question was very easy compared with the Palestinian issue.

We must also remember that the Syrian-Israeli talks continue to move one step forward and one step backward, even though this began long ago and our Syrian brothers were quick to agree to go to the Madrid conference.

We realize that the Israelis are the most difficult people to negotiate with. This is why we are trying to confront them with strong and firm positions based on adherence to the Oslo accord in letter and spirit. I stress to you that we will not neglect this issue at all. And there are world powers supporting us. For example, the EC recently issued a strongly worded statement condemning Israel's continued attempts to expand settlement operations.

The accord concluded in Washington and Cairo, whose foundations and general outlines were drawn up in Oslo, is not only a Palestinian-Israeli accord, but an international accord signed by the United States and Russia and to which the European states are a party, and it was espoused by the United Nations and welcomed by the Islamic Conference Organization, the Arab League, and the Nonaligned states.

[Qallab] It is noted that whenever a possibility looms on the horizon of expanding the scope of the PNA to include the West Bank, a security setback takes place in Gaza, returning matters to square one. Why?

['Arafat] The aim is to postpone the implementation of the accord.

[Qallab] But it appears that the Israelis are colluding with the rejectionist Palestinian forces seeking to thwart the peace process.

['Arafat] As I told you, there are some Israelis centers of power trying to thwart the accord and postpone its implementation. These forces are sharing the same trench with the Palestinian forces openly seeking to topple and thwart this accord, for numerous reasons, including the aspiration to monopolize the PA.

[Qallab] Do you mean Hamas?

['Arafat] I mean all the rejectionist Palestinian forces.

[Qallab] But Hamas is the backbone of these forces. Is that not right?

['Arafat] No. Hamas is part of these forces. There are numerous other factions.

[Qallab] Are there contacts between this opposition and Israel?

['Arafat] You should address that question to those forces.

[Qallab] I am asking the head of the state of Palestine—the man who is acquainted with everything and who is in control of all clues...are there such contacts?

['Arafat] What I can say in this connection is that these forces have made contacts with the Americans on more than one occasion. And that meetings took place in this connection in Amman and in other places. Some of these contacts were declared; other were not. I am aware of numerous things in this connection, and I will reveal these things at the right time.

[Qallab] Brother Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat], I am asking about the contacts with the Israelis, not the Americans.

['Arafat] When the right time comes, I will say everything and put all the facts before the Palestinian people. These facts belong to this people, not a leader or official.

[Qallab] Did any contacts take place between Hamas and Israel following the abduction of the Israeli soldier Nashon Wachsman some time ago?

['Arafat] Do not rush things. Everything will be revealed in time. I am a responsible man, and when the right time comes, I will reveal everything. There are numerous and major files.

[Qallab] Let me be frank and tell you that the Americans and the Israelis accuse you of not being firm with Hamas and the opposition, saying that your contacts with it have been uninterrupted.

['Arafat] Hamas and the opposition are part of the Palestinian people. I do not allow anyone to tell me how to deal with my Palestinian people. My contacts with Hamas and others are a Palestinian affair in which I do not allow anyone to interfere. It is only the Palestinian council of ministers, the PNA, and the PLO Executive Committee which decide how the PNA should deal with the opposition. The people of Mecca know its affairs best [Arabic proverb].

[Qallab] But Hamas and some opposition forces do not recognize the PA, the council of ministers, or the Executive Committee.

['Arafat] That is inaccurate. And maybe your question is based on the position of Hamas and opposition leaders abroad. But we are committed to democracy and political pluralism under the law and the system and on the basis that there is no parallel authority to the PNA, and also on the basis of safeguarding the achievements of the Palestinian people.

[Qallab] Mr. President, you held a dialogue with Hamas when you were abroad, that is, before the establishment of the PNA. You also held a dialogue with it immediately after your arrival in Gaza. But you suspended this dialogue recently, saying that the [Hamas'] dialogue should be with Fatah, not the PNA. Why this change?

['Arafat] Fatah is the main force on the Palestinian scene, and the dialogue with it is necessary, constructive, and in the interests of the Palestinian people. I have not rejected the dialogue with the opposition forces. And there are elements in the National Authority who are in constant and daily contact with Hamas, the Jihad, the Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine], and the Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine]. I challenge any one of them to deny the existence of these contacts.

Our concerns are numerous, and this is not new to us. We are not like those whose only concern is to listen to the radio, read newspapers, look for positions [to criticize], and issue inflammatory statements. We are preoccupied with the concerns of the Palestinian people, who have made great sacrifices, offered martyrs, and suffered tragedies and calamities. They are entitled to expect from us and others real achievements, not inflammatory statements and partisan leaflets while sitting far from the battlefield in near and remote capitals.

[Qallab] Did the people whom you describe as the proponents of revolutionary phrases try to contact you after your arrival in Gaza?

['Arafat] Certainly. And the dialogue between me and them has not been interrupted for one moment, neither in the past nor at present. I told you that there are contacts and dialogues in one way or another between the National Authority and all the opposition forces.

[Qallab] Including the 10 Damascus-based factions?

['Arafat] Including the 10 factions and 20 factions!

[Qallab] Did you sense during your contacts with Hamas that it has one decision and one leadership?

['Arafat] No. Hamas does not have one decision or one address.

[Qallab] And as you have said on numerous occasions, its main decisionmaking is abroad, not in Palestine?

['Arafat] Yes.

[Qallab] Do you mean that the main decisionmaking is in the Muslim Brotherhood's hands?

['Arafat] I am saying abroad, and I hope you will not force me to focus on one Palestinian opposition faction more than others.

[Qallab] Allow me to ask about the truth of what has been reported, namely that you asked the Muslim Brotherhood to mediate between you and Hamas recently, especially after the Israeli soldier's abduction.

['Arafat] I am not going to give you any details in this connection. Such matters are not for publication or handling by the press.

[Qallab] We know that matters have not been excellent between you and Syria. What is the true situation between you and the Syrian leadership, both as PLO and as National Authority?

['Arafat] The relationship is normal, and the position of the brothers in Syria is known and declared as regards the Oslo accords. For our part, we are trying to accommodate the Syrian position along the lines of our attempts to accommodate the other Arab positions.

[Qallab] We noted that the Syrian attack on the peace accords concluded so far was conducted with some flexibility recently with regard to you. Has any progress occurred at the level of your relations with Damascus?

['Arafat] I stress to you that we have not as yet cut off the dialogue with any Arab state, whether with the brothers in Syria or others.

[Qallab] On the subject of relations with the Arabs, we have noticed a retreat in the Egyptian role of support for you in the negotiations with Israel. What are the reasons for that?

['Arafat] Your observation is incorrect. What you are saying is inaccurate. The truth is that Egypt is making great, continuous, and special efforts to help us in our talks with Israel and to ensure progress in the peace process. We must not forget that most of our negotiation rounds with Israel took place in Egypt.

[Qallab] I have noticed that the early momentum in this connection has tangibly receded recently.

['Arafat] At the beginning our position and the Israeli position were too far apart. That necessitated the continuous presence of the Egyptian brothers. Now their help is sought when there is a crisis.

[Qallab] The Jordanian arena is one of the arenas most influenced by and also influencing Palestinian developments. We have noticed that your "promised" visit to Amman has not taken place since your return to Palestine despite the fact that a date was set more than once for such a visit. Why?

['Arafat] The reason is my continuous engagements on the one hand and His Majesty King Husayn's continuous engagements on the other.

[Qallab] The visit was supposed to take place before the recent Islamic conference. Why was it postponed?

['Arafat] Actually, contacts between me and his majesty the king never stopped. I was supposed to visit Amman in the period you mentioned but the sudden departure of my brother King Husayn prevented that.

[Qallab] Did you meet with him in Casablanca?

['Arafat] Yes, and it was a meeting pervaded by extreme cordiality and understanding.

[Qallab] When will your scheduled meeting to Jordan take place? We have heard that King Husayn contacted you and discussed the visit with you some days ago.

['Arafat] I will pay the visit at the nearest opportunity, God willing. I had to postpone it because of the security developments in recent days.

[Qallab] The Jordanians are saying that the plaque placed at the entrance of the holy Dome of the Rock commemorating the new construction carried out by the Jordanian monarch has been destroyed. They are very upset about that.

['Arafat] I really do not wish to dwell too much on the details of these matters. There are many observations. On the question of the plaque, you should remember that Jerusalem is still under Israeli control and that such things could occur in any country, even Jordan itself.

Relations between us and our brothers are greater and more important than these transient issues. I am confident that these relations will remain strong and firm, based on mutual understanding and respect.

[Qallab] The question of confederation with Jordan was raised in the past. What is your position now after all these developments?

['Arafat] That is a strategic matter. Our [Palestine] National Council [PNC] was the Palestinian legislative body which passed the resolution on confederation with Jordan. We are still committed to that decision. There has been no change or alteration of our position on that matter.

[Qallab] Has there been anything new regarding the question of Jerusalem?

['Arafat] Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian state. Resolutions on that issue were passed by the recent Islamic conference and the Arab League. We insist on these resolutions. There is no change in the position of the PLO and the PNA in this connection.

[Qallab] There has been much talk about a Palestinian passport. When will such a passport be issued and when will it be used?

['Arafat] That matter has been virtually completed. The Authority will begin to issue these passports very soon.

[Qallab] Are there any guarantees that Arab and foreign states will not close their doors to people carrying such a passport?

['Arafat] This matter was officially raised at the Arab interior ministers conference in Tunis. The response was positive.

[Qallab] What about the European states, have they been contacted on this matter?

['Arafat] Yes, and all the states which recognized the Oslo agreements will recognize the Palestinian passport.

[Qallab] The Jordanian monarch said once that he was in favor of dual passports for the Jordanians and the Palestinians. Would you give the Jordanians the same treatment if the Palestinians were allowed to have Jordanian citizenship in addition to Palestinian citizenship?

['Arafat] The Palestinian passport will be given to any Palestinian meeting the requirements, regardless of what passport he holds. There will be no precondition that he should give up his current citizenship.

[Qallab] I am referring to Jordanians of Jordanian origin, not Jordanians of Palestinian origin.

['Arafat] Yes, if they meet the requirements.

[Qallab] At this point in the peace process, how do you view U.S.-Palestinian relations? Are you satisfied with the role being played by President Bill Clinton's administration between you and Israel?

['Arafat] These relations are good, excellent. We were really satisfied with President Clinton's Congress testimony. We are very grateful and we thank him.

[Qallab] Is the United States expected to open a legation in Gaza, similar to those in some European and Arab states?

['Arafat] The U.S. consul in Jerusalem, not the ambassador in Tel Aviv, is the one who deals with us. What applies to the United States also applies to the EC.

[Qallab] Do you expect some states to open legations in the PNA areas?

['Arafat] Yes, certainly.

[Qallab] Such as?

['Arafat] Such as Morocco, Egypt, and Tunisia.

[Qallab] This means that the Arab east countries will not do that.

['Arafat] No. There are promises from many of these countries but I have no right to name these states now.

[Qallab] The story of the donor states has become like the [proverbial] story of the oil jug. Have the donor states given you anything of what was recently decided and promised?

['Arafat] Little has been paid. I recall what the deputy chairman of the World Bank said at one of the meetings. He said we had promised Yasir 'Arafat $720 million at the beginning of the year, then reduced that to $400 million which was then reduced to $240 million which was reduced in Brussels to $125 million. I do not know if they intend to reduce that further.

[Qallab] What are their reasons, and why do the donor states not give what they had promised to give?

['Arafat] Regrettably, we have had many promises and little implementation.

[Qallab] They are talking about the absence of institutions and autocratic decisionmaking.

['Arafat] That is not the real reason. I have challenged them and said to them, you are welcome to implement the decided projects through the UN insitutions. That, regrettably, is a feeble excuse. There are Palestinian qualifications acknowledged by everyone.

[Qallab] Mr. President, you talk about Palestinian qualifications but you yourself, in an interview with this same paper, complained about the failure of rich Palestinians to participate in building their homeland, and you talked about an economic tiger at one point...

['Arafat, interrupting] The economic tiger will come. The best proof of that is that we have managed to stand on our feet despite the blockade imposed on us and despite our dwindled economic resources.

[Qallab] We are asking about the rich Palestinians. You blame the donor states but you do not blame the rich Palestinians whom you once described as an economic empire.

['Arafat] The rich Palestinians have begun to come forward. So far, there are branches of 11 banks on Palestinian territory. And some companies have begun to come forward.

[Qallab] Are you satisfied with the contribution of the rich Palestinians?

['Arafat] No, I am not satisfied but I say that they have made a start, and I expect much more from the rich Palestinians who must contribute to the building of the homeland of their children and grandchildren.

[Qallab] Why have you not initiated a dialogue with the Palestinian capitalists?

['Arafat] Who told you that we have not initiated such a dialogue? That dialogue has not stopped.

[Qallab] What are their excuses for not making a contribution?

['Arafat] You know that capital is cautious by nature.

[Qallab] Is there nobody among the Palestinians who can play the role Rothschild played in building the state of Israel?

['Arafat] So far, there is no Palestinian Rothschild.

[Qallab] Despite the fact that, in terms of financial capabilities, there may be someone who is even more important than Rothschild.

['Arafat] Of course there are dozens of Palestinians as financially capable as Rothschild but there is no Palestinian Rothschild.

[Qallab] Abu-'Ammar used always to be the first to move to put out the fire when there is a fire in the house. Now we see you stationed in Gaza and no longer trying to extinguish Arab fires.

['Arafat] I am really very pained by the Arab nation's disunity and loss of direction. I try, and I make contacts but, as you know, I am preoccupied with the cause of my people which has all the priority and which has now entered a delicate and sensitive phase requiring all efforts.

You know that I work day and night for building a homeland worthy of the Palestinian people and rebuilding the infrastructures destroyed by the occupation. The responsibility we shoulder is too heavy for mountains to bear. Our work requires every moment of our time.

Furthermore, you know that the burden of the Gulf earthquake [war] which hit the entire region falls mostly on our people. The richest Palestinian community, namely the Palestinian community in Kuwait, suffered grave losses estimated at $12 billion. The Iraqis were not expelled but the Palestinians were.

[Qallab] After all the time that has passed since what you call the Gulf earthquake, and regardless of its causes and circumstances, what is the real state of your relations with the Gulf states?

['Arafat] I have visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia twice. The truth is that Saudi Arabia is one of the countries which is making a clear and major contribution alongside the donor states and some other Gulf states.

[Qallab] Our final question. We have noticed that the estrangement between you and Yitzhaq Rabin has diminished considerably. Can we say that you have become friends?

['Arafat] It is not a question of hate or resentment. What matters to me is the interests of the Palestinian people, not personal positions and feelings. To answer your question, I say that I now understand the Israeli prime minister better and he understands me better than before.

[Qallab] And another question, Mr. President. How do you view the PNA achievements in this past short period?

['Arafat] To be accurate, I must say that we are facing many difficulties and we have made some mistakes which we should not have made, but generally speaking I am proud of our achievements in two main fields: The field of education where matters are proceeding very successfully, and the security field where we have been able to bring under control a strange situation and where some had bet on an outbreak of Palestinian civil war.

PA Members Warn Talks Boycott Over Land Seizures

TA0901181395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The problem of the disputed land in the territories is escalating. Senior Palestinian Authority [PA] members today called for stopping land seizures and settlement expansion. Residents of Yattah demonstrated near 'Otni'el for two hours halting the paving of a security road. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports:

[Zaqen] Whether it is a real problem or Palestinian pressure tactics on Israel, the land issue is playing a growing role in the political process. Members of the PA and various organizations, including Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], convened in Jericho where they presented a united position on the demand to halt expropriation of land and expansion of settlements. PA spokesmen were firm in their stand. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, the official in charge of information, called for the cessation of discussions with Israel if it does not stop expanding settlements.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi noted that there is a Palestinian consensus that the process cannot continue without a solution to the land problem.

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording, in English] It has to be made clear that there is a consensus, a Palestinian consensus, that the peace process cannot continue while the settlement activities continue. I do not think that you can reconcile the settlement process with the peace process. [end recording]

While the Jericho gathering was taking place, dozens of demonstrators from the village of Yattah in the Hebron area managed to halt for two hours tractors paving a security road in the settlement of 'Otni'el. The Palestinians claim that the demonstration broke up only after a Civil Administration officer promised to look into the issue.

The Palestinians seem to be exploiting the momentum of the demonstrations and the support for their cause among many government ministers. Therefore, can expect more Palestinian land demands in the territories soon.

PA, German Officials Meet in East Jerusalem

TA0901173795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] There was a working meeting this afternoon between four members of the Palestinian Authority [PA] and a delegation from the Berlin Municipality in East Jerusalem. Aviv Bushinsky and Yoni Ben-Menahem were there:

[Bushinsky] Despite the political sensitivity and the massive police presence to foil political gatherings by PA members in Jerusalem, the first political meeting of its type was held in East Jerusalem today. At noon, four PA members conferred at the Ambassador Hotel with political representatives from Germany. They held a working meeting and a luncheon, we were told by Deputy Berlin Mayor (Christina Berkmann), who also serves as minister of labor and women affairs in Berlin.

[Begin (Berkmann) recording, in English] The minister for labor and the minister for social affairs and the minister for health.... and we speak about... we have an interest to support the process of a peace. [end recording]

[Bushinsky] The Palestinian ministers—such as Umm-Jihad [Intisar al-Wazir], who is in charge of the welfare portfolio; Dr. Zakariya al-Agha, who is in charge of housing; and Riyad al-Za'nun, who is in charge of health—asked us for humanitarian aid, advice on health matters, building hospitals, and medicine, (Berkmann) said. The aid the Palestinians asked for is not restricted to the autonomy area; we have projects in Ramallah and in Bayt Sahur in East Jerusalem, she added.

The German representatives stressed that they were surprised by the massive police and Border Police presence around the Ambassador Hotel. (Berkmann) claimed that the East Jerusalem meeting was coordinated with the Israeli Foreign Ministry.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 9 January adds that "the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem has denied that it had prior knowledge of the meeting between PA members and a Berlin Municipal delegation held in East Jerusalem today."]

'Azmi Shu'aybi, in charge of youth and sport in the PA, told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that they do not need permission from anybody to hold meetings in East Jerusalem. He said the police arrived because of his official car, which has a Palestinian license plate. Since then they have not stopped harassing us, he added.

Cabinet Holds Weekly Session; Ministers Comment

JN0701165295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat this afternoon presided over the National Authority's weekly cabinet session. The cabinet discussed several decisions related to the latest developments in the peace process. Details are in the following recorded message by 'Adil al-Za'nun from the Gaza Strip:

[Begin recording] Following the National Authority's cabinet session, chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat at the presidential headquarters in Gaza today, Minister of Trade and Industry Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', said the cabinet had adopted several important decisions. The cabinet agreed to step up efforts and maintain the Palestinian position that Israel's settlement activity is illegitimate. The cabinet also agreed to pursue contacts with the international community, insist on having the Security Council convene, and form committees to defend the territories in all regions.

For his part, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, stressed that the issue of settlement activity and the expropriation of territory is still a main concern for the National Authority, noting that this issue will remain a top priority until there is a real and complete halt to Israel's settlement activity.

Minister Sha'th said Israel should realize that peace is more important than settlement activity. He added that the issue of the prisoners also received great attention at the cabinet session. He said that continuing to hold those prisoners is a flagrant injustice. He stressed the need to work to free the prisoners in Israeli jails, saying that the conscience of the world and Israel should not allow them to remain in prison even one more day.

Regarding the wage scale, Dr. Sha'th observed that there will be a 15 percent increase to all salaries in line with the wage scale in place in the West Bank. It has also been decided to ease taxes levied from citizens in Gaza and afterward in the West Bank.

Dr. Sha'th noted that tax exemptions will be higher than in the past, saying that citizens will not pay income tax if their salaries are less than $400. This is meant to alleviate the suffering of citizens in the next stage.

Tomorrow it will be decided when President Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. Minister Sha'th is scheduled to contact Minister Peres tomorrow.

In another development, ['Arafat's adviser] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah commented on reports in the Israeli media about the PLO's support for the Israeli Labor Party in the previous elections, saying: This is an inaccurate interpretation of what was said by brother Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]. The PLO has never interfered in such domestic Israeli affairs, Abu-Rudaynah said. [end recording]

Alliance Warns Against Fighters Transfer From Lebanon

JN0801200395 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 8 Jan 95

[Statement issued by the "Alliance of Palestinian Forces"; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on 'Arafat's request to the Lebanese Government to allow the transfer of some of his armed supporters from the Lebanese territory to the administrative self-rule areas in Gaza and Jericho, which are under Zionist occupation, the Alliance of Palestinian Forces issued the following statement:

Yasir 'Arafat's attempt to deploy more armed supporters in the administrative Authority's area, which is under occupation in Gaza and Jericho, to strengthen his oppressive security force in these areas provides additional threats to our people and their valiant intifadah in the occupied homeland. This prompts us in the Alliance of the Palestinian Forces to warn against such a step and to stress the following issues:

1. 'Arafat's request is yet more proof of the great dilemma facing his agreement with the Zionist entity in the face of the wide-scale Palestinian popular rejection of this agreement and our people's growing intifadah and confrontations against the Zionist enemy. Undoubtedly, the arrival of additional armed men to strengthen 'Arafat's security force in Gaza and Jericho will greatly harm our Palestinian people's intifadah and their militant national and Islamic forces that adhere to attacking the Zionist occupation troops. It will also encourage 'Arafat

to exercise further oppression and commit massacres against the militants of the Palestinian people inside the occupied homeland.

2. As we praise the position of the Lebanese Government that rejects the Oslo-Cairo agreements and which opposes the hostile plans of hegemony, capitulation, and normalization in the region, we urge the Lebanese Government to block the road before 'Arafat's attempts to suppress our masses in the occupied homeland and to stir the sedition of a Palestinian civil war. We also urge the Lebanese Government not to allow him to transfer his armed men from the Lebanese territory, a measure which he seeks to use to strengthen the Oslo-Cairo agreements at the time in which these agreements are coming under siege and weakening, and when its advocates are proving that they failed to fulfill their security pledges to the Zionist enemy to liquidate the intifadah and the Palestinian national struggle.

[Signed] The Alliance of Palestinian Forces

Algeria

Commentary, Criticism on Second Rome Meeting

Closed Sessions Begin

LD0901150795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Rome meeting [of Algerian political parties and organizations], which is sponsored by the Sant'Egidio Catholic association, began yesterday in closed sessions. Leaders of national political parties, prominent personalities, and a representative of the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] attended the meeting.

At a news conference attended by FFS [Socialist Forces Front] leader [Hocine] Ait Ahmed and Ali Yahia Abdennour, chairman of the Algerian League of Human Rights, the organizers said that the proceedings started with bilateral meetings and will be extended tomorrow to include all the participants, some of whom have not yet arrived.

The organizers confirmed the presence of the [FLN leader] Abdelhamid Mehri, Ahmed Ben Bella [former president and leader of the Movement for Democracy in Algeria], [FFS leader] Hocine Ait Ahmed, [Worker's Party leader] Louisa Hannoun, [FIS representative] Anouar Haddam, and (Miziane Babouche), representing the [Social] Movement for Authenticity.

International journalists have been barred from the meeting. However, a spokesman for the Catholic association said that the media will be informed of the results of the meetings later in a statement or at a news conference. [passage omitted]

Civilian Attacks Condemned

LD0901213395 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] For the second time in a few weeks, officials of a large part of the Algerian opposition and Islamist leaders have been meeting in Rome to attempt to draw up a peace offer.

The problem of violence is at the heart of the talks, with an entirely serious chance of progress this time. The officials of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] have very clearly condemned attacks targeting civilians, whatever their views, religion, or nationality. Our correspondent in Rome, Alain de Chalvron, gives us an assessment:

[Chalvron] [passage omitted] The participants, in fact almost all of the Algerian parties which met here before in November, have the firm intention of reaching definite decisions and achieving concrete proposals this time, to put an end to the crisis, and the new element could be a change of attitude on the part of the FIS:

[Begin recording] [Ali Yahia, president of the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights] There is a real progression on the part of the FIS toward solving the crisis, and above all toward putting an end to its acts of violence, particularly those which affect the civilian population, journalists, and foreigners. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Chalvron] Assuming that the participants in this Rome meeting achieve a consensus, and they certainly appear determined to do so, the Algiers authorities will have to be persuaded to accept the decisions reached here in Rome as a basis for discussion. That will not be the easiest part—the government in power in Algiers has already condemned this meeting and even threatened those taking part in it with judicial proceedings.

Dialogue Desired

LD0901173595 Paris LCI Television in French 1500 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The second meeting between opposition leaders and Islamists is taking place in Rome. [passage omitted] The following commentary is by Hocine Ait Ahmed, leader of the Socialist Forces Front, or FFS.

[Begin Ait Ahmed recording] Today we wish to deny what the Algerian head of state claims—that the political parties do not wish to engage in dialogue. We only wish to show that we do want to engage in dialogue, and above all we wish to speak with one voice in this dialogue. Even more than this, we hope that the dialogue will not exclude those in power, but will include them. We want to move toward a genuine democratic transition with the Army. We are reasonable, we are moderate, and we want to demonstrate that it is those who have held power since 1962 who have imposed themselves upon the Algerian people by force, without any kind of legitimacy. [end recording]

Attaf Calls Meeting 'a Mere Mask'

LD0901231495 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Studio interview with Ahmed Attaf, official government spokesman, by unidentified correspondent—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] We have here with us Mr. Ahmed Attaf, the government's official spokesman, who is going to answer some questions from us on the second Rome meeting. Mr. Attaf, we welcome you again.

The first question is this: A statement was issued by the State Presidency on Saturday [7 January] condemning the so-called Sant'Egidio second meeting; what is the background and what are the aims of this statement?

[Attaf] The purpose of this statement by the presidency was to dot the i's and cross the t's firmly and calmly, and to define the limits that cannot be allowed to be violated.

The purpose of the statement was to say, both inside and outside Algeria, that the Algerian state will not, under any circumstances, either today or tomorrow, accept the internationalization of the Algerian crisis or the internationalization of the solution to this crisis. By taking this stance, the state is truly reflecting the feelings and the stance of the Algerian people, who are against such an internationalization.

[Correspondent] Mr. Attaf, you described the first meeting organized by the Sant'Egidio community as a nonevent. Could you explain this description?

[Attaf] Yes. In the past, I did describe the first Sant'-Egidio meeting as a nonevent. I meant by using this description to question the ability of such meetings to internationalize the Algerian crisis and to take the keys to solving the Algerian crisis away from the Algerians. I am today repeating the same description and I say that the Sant'Egidio meeting is a nonevent for us, as long as the Algerian people refuse to internationalize the crisis and to submit to foreign control, and as long as the Algerian state is determined to face up to such desperate attempts.

[Correspondent] What are, in your opinion, the factors that led those parties to take part in the meetings organized by Sant'Egidio?

[Attaf] Any political analysis of such behavior by some Algerian parties would in my opinion reveal three factors or reasons. The first is the fear of and the desire to evade the verdict of the people, the people to whom the state has decided to give the lead in managing every single detail of their affairs, the people to whom we want to give the last word in managing every single detail of the country's affairs.

The second factor is that when these parties failed to impose their own interests, their own immediate party interests inside the homeland, they went abroad, looking for something that would help them impose these interests at the expense of the homeland's vital interests. The third factor, in my opinion, is these parties' realization of the existence of some foreign powers and establishments and their belief that they could use these powers and establishments for their own ends. In fact, what has happened is quite the opposite; these foreign powers and establishments are the ones who are today using these parties; I can even go further than this to say that these parties have now become tools to implement foreign conspiracies and plans. In this regard I would like the Algerian people to know the following truth: Sant'Egidio is a mere mask and a curtain behind which foreign powers and establishments are moving. The Algerian state has accurate and confirmed information regarding these foreign powers and establishments which are moving behind the Sant'Egidio curtain, using some of our parties, and we are well aware of every detail of the intentions of these powers.

[Correspondent] Mr. Attaf, these parties have justified their participation in the Rome meetings by saying that it is impossible to hold such meetings in Algeria and that the doors to dialogue are closed in Algeria. What is your opinion of this justification?

[Attaf] This is a justification that is untrue. It cannot be accepted for a single moment by those who have kept in their memories all the stages of the national dialogue and followed it with objectivity. Allow me to recall that when the national dialogue started, the head of state suggested to the parties, as parties, thay they should take the initiative of submitting an agenda for dialogue, but they failed to prepare such an agenda. . Second, the head of state urged the parties taking part in the dialogue to meet each other on Algerian territory. He also stressed more than once that the scope of the dialogue is wide open to include all the issues that concern the parties, particularly the solving of the Algerian crisis, and as of now this dialogue is still open. We do not fear the parties meeting each other, but we condemn their meeting abroad and their being manipulated by foreign powers and establishments for ends and interests that are completely separate from those of Algeria.

Paper Terms Participants 'Criminals'

LD0901195595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A meeting [of Algerian parties], sponsored by the Catholic association Sant'Egidio, started in Rome this afternoon in closed session. [passage omitted]

This meeting met with wide condemnation in the national arena.

The members of the National Transitional Council issued a statement this afternoon which said: It is strange for some political formations to work toward internationalizing the Algerian crisis in order to enable foreign parties to interfere in our internal affairs.

The statement said that the Algerian people reject the attempts that are under way to internationalize the Algerian crisis, such as the Rome meeting, and condemn such endeavors. The statement added that the members of the National Transitional Council, as part of the people, reject these attempts, condemn them, and call on the people to be alert and reflect on the the situation in order to preserve their unity, state, and future.

In its issue today, EL-MOUDJAHID touched on the Rome meeting and said: With the blessing of the Catholic association Sant'Egidio, the meeting began its second session with the participation of parties seeking to speak on behalf of all the people, and also negotiate in their name. These parties are criminals who do not hesitate to bless the crime against the people. [passage omitted]

HAMAS Issues Statement

LD1001133295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The proceedings of the Transitional National Council's autumn session concluded yesterday. [passage omitted]

Members of the Transitional National Council issued a statement yesterday condemning the Rome meeting.

For its part, HAMAS, the Islamic Society Movement [Harakat al- Mujtama' al-Islami], issued a statement in which it called for the sparing of Algerians' blood, and the immediate return to stability. The HAMAS movement said in the same statement that it has received with satisfaction the signals and initiatives of national reconciliation between the Algerians, but at the same time rejects all attempts at internationalizing the Algerian issue under whatever cover, and from all side.

The HAMAS movement called on the authority to conduct a serious and comprehensive dialogue in the presence of all the active political sides, based on real guarantees to get out of the crisis, and achieve national reconciliation inside Algeria. [passage omitted]

Interior Minister on Fundamentalism, Elections

MM1001113595 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Jan 95 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Interior Minister Abderrahmane Meziane Cherif by unidentified correspondent in Tunis "yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-HAYAH] You said that a year of Arab security action has produced modest results. What are your criticisms of the Arab interior ministers council's performance?

[Cherif] We in Algeria are frank and practical and believe in nothing but tangible things. In this context we understand that a consensus is difficult to attain in these forums, since the brothers are often content with condemning terrorism, ignoring the dangers of this epidemic threatening everyone. This is what we said (in the closed session).

The important thing is that an understanding and a consensus was reached, and none of the brothers criticized us for our frankness, since some Arab countries have not taken any positive measure to confront terrorism. But now, and after the consensus reached at the Arab interior minister council's 12th session (concluded yesterday), we are optimistic about the future.

[AL-HAYAH] You stressed that statistics have proved that 90 percent of the armed fundamentalist elements which have been arrested belong to networks involved with drug trafficking. And you said at the ministers' meetings that "Islamic organizations" finance terrorism in Algeria. Are there any details?

[Cherif] The relationship between terrorism and sabotage on the one hand and drug trafficking on the other is now known, and it is a strong relationship. As for links with Islamic organizations, THE SUNDAY TIMES and DER SPIEGEL have carried exposures recently proving that these organizations are working earnestly to collect money to fuel the terrorism phenomenon. We should ask: Why Algeria? Why Egypt?

Violent actions began in the eighties, because their planners were and still are among those who could not stomach Algeria's achievement of independence and its emergence as a notable state playing an important role on the Arab and international scenes. In this context we should recall the role Algeria played at the international economic level when it called for a new economic order that takes account of the developing countries' interests. And it did its utmost to achieve this aim in the various international forums. Thus we understand that what Algeria is being exposed to is nothing but revenge from those begrudging it and those who thought that their interests had been harmed.

Among the spiteful I mention all those who took up arms against the Algerian revolution and those who sought to keep it in the darkness of colonialism and tyranny. They are the traitors whom we call in Algeria "Harakis" [collaborators with the French], who are now using Islam as a cover.

[AL-HAYAH] In your speech you separate the suspended electoral process and the democratic process, which you stressed is continuing. What practical steps are expected to be taken to reactivate it?

[Cherif] The steps are primarily to organize the elections, work to include all the legitimate parties in them, and to implement the decisions listed in President Zeroual's speech to the nation on 31 October 1994. We expect all the political forces which renounce violence and accept the principle of the rotation of power for the sake of consolidating real democracy in the country.

In my view, that is the only way to enable the Algerians to surmount the crisis.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you believe it is practically and administratively possible to hold the elections before the end of the year, or, rather, before the summer, given that it is necessary to secure political conditions to guarantee their success?

[Cherif] We pledged to complete material and technical preparations for the voting process before the end of next June in implementation of President Zeroual's instructions. As for the political conditions, I believe that the presidency has pursued the method of consultation and dialogue from the outset, and it will work to secure the political conditions to ensure the participation of all the legitimate formations in the presidential elections.

[AL-HAYAH] If an Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] figure, or a figure close to it runs for the presidential elections and wins, would you accept the results?

[Cherif] I am a practical and realistic man, and I cannot deal with such hypothetical issues. I pointed out in a previous answer that the door is open to all the legitimate parties to participate. And in that case the election results will, of course, be binding on everyone.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you expect progress in the national dialogue in the stage ahead, and what are the conditions for including the FIS' moderate wing in the dialogue?

[Cherif] The dialogue in itself is a positive thing, and I am always optimistic. I would like here to recall that the head of state has worked earnestly to include the figures renouncing violence and the political formations that have nothing to do with terrorism, for the sake of consolidating democracy.

If figures and tendencies (from the Front) agree on the principle of renouncing violence, I believe that matters will be less complicated, thus helping to extricate the country from the crisis.

Prime Minister Sifi on Economic Restructuring Policy

LD0901214395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Sifi's remarks are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi, opening the national workshop on the industrial restructuring policy, talked about the guidelines of the government's policy. Privatization was one of the prominent topics in the prime minister's speech, about which he said:

[Sifi] The government intends to draw up the necessary privatization plans unconnected with any dogmatic considerations or political outbidding and with the aim of improving the performance of existing production capabilities, and responding in a better way to the requirements of the internal market and the far-reaching transformations witnessed by the international market [passage omitted]

During this meeting, Mokdad Sifi announced the creation of a supervisory committee to verify the soundness of the privatization operations:

[Sifi] Pending creation of a suitable legal framework, which will also be put forward for broad discussion at a suitable time, I have decided to set up a committee for supervising and verifying the soundness of the privatization operations which will start throughout the transitional period, for the sake of guaranteeing the maximum level of transparency and preserving the material interests of the national group. [passage omitted]

Concerning the importance of the public sector and its role in developing national production, the prime minister said:

[Sifi] We cannot forget or pretend to have forgotten that the development of the public sector, which still enjoys a much prominence in national production, finds justification in the history of our country. [passage omitted]

Egypt

PLO Leaders Arrive in Cairo for Consultations

Advance Meeting With Musa

NC0901202695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1920 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met this evening with PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin. The meeting was attended by Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Palestinian ambassador in Cairo.

After the meeting, Mr. Mahmud 'Abbas stated that he discussed with Mr. 'Amr Musa preparations for tomorrow's meeting between President Mubarak and President Yasir 'Arafat, during which they will discuss various Palestinian issues.

He said they will discuss the Palestinian political issues, particularly the stumbling negotiations regarding elections, redeployment of Israeli forces, and Israel's settlement-building process that has now spread to all parts of the occupied territories. Regarding increasing the Israeli defense budget, Mahmud 'Abbas said that Israel is still interested in security issues and that the establishment of peace has not yet sunk into the Israeli mind. He noted that it will be a long time before the comprehensive concept of peace sinks in.

He added that Israel's continued settlement-building and refusal to implement the articles of the Oslo and Cairo agreements could pose some danger and hamper progress in the negotiations. In addition, the peace process will face a dangerous crisis if Israel continues its stance.

He affirmed that a halt in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process will mean that there will be no peace with the Arab sides.

Regarding the controversy his books have caused, Mr. 'Abbas said he does not understand why such a fuss is being made about the book now, particularly since it was published over four months ago and appeared in most Arab and Israeli newspapers.

Regarding reports about contacts between the Palestinians and the Israelis, Abu-Mazin said that there are two types of contacts. The first are contacts pertaining to the elections. The second type are contacts that used to take place through meetings with the Labor Party and the Likud on the peace process. He pointed out that these meetings were sometimes failures and at other times successful. He affirmed that the Palestinians never once thought of urging the people to vote for one side or the other, or to accept one side and not to accept the other, because such an issue is none of their business.

On the accusation leveled by Israel against Egypt that it interferes in Israel's internal affairs, Mahmud 'Abbas said that the fact that Egypt meets with Israeli sides, be they Arab or otherwise, does not mean that it is interfering in Israel's internal affairs. Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni said that Egypt meets with the Likud, the Labor, and the rest of the parties, and that this is not considered interference in Israel's internal affairs.

'Abbas said that the Israeli furor is an to start internal battles before holding the next elections.

He added: I ask the Israeli parties to look for other pretexts away from us.

Mr. Mahmud 'Abbas concluded his statements by saying that the Arab situation should be more united, understanding, and harmonious so that all the problems confronting the Arab nation can be solved.

'Arafat Meets With Mubarak

NC1001112095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1045 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at the Presidential Office at noon today. They held a private bilateral session of talks.

Meeting Continues Over Lunch

NC1001121695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak resumed his talks with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat over a working lunch hosted for the Palestinian president and his delegation at the Presidential Office. The Egyptian and Palestinian delegations attended.

'Arafat, Musa Meet

NC1001115795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1135 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has held a meeting with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. They discussed developments in the Palestinian issue and obstacles holding up the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Musa Comments on Peace, Regional Issues

NC0901160595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has cautioned that the peace process is currently going through an extremely serious stage and that optimism is gradually diminishing. He emphasized that the Palestinian issue is central. He said that the Palestinian-Israeli track is primary and that it can determine the success or failure of the peace process.

In a statement before the Consultative Council today, Musa said: We can see that there is hesitation in implementing the Declaration of Principles. This is evident in the return of the policy of building settlements or expanding existing ones and the confiscation of Arab lands, both owned by the public and by individuals. He added: We neither accept nor tolerate this policy. It is a serious matter that involves not only the Palestinians and Israelis but the entire peace process. He affirmed that Egypt rejects the settlement policy and warns against continuing it, pointing out that this will ruin the peace process entirely.

The foreign minister emphasized the need to prompt other peaceful tracks, the Syrian and Lebanese, to reach an agreement as soon as possible. He pointed out that the peace process is built on the land-for-peace principle. He said that Egypt cannot tolerate an Israeli withdrawal short of the international borders and insists on restoring the occupied Palestinian territories, including the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza, as well as the Syrian Golan Heights and south Lebanon.

In his statement, the foreign minister stressed that each party should get what he demands to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. He said that rights should be exchanged for rights, commitments for commitments, and peace for peace. We are not prepared to deviate from this framework, he said, adding: We call on all parties to respect their signatures and implement the Declaration of Principles.

Musa called on the peace sponsors to shoulder their responsibilities, to save time to step up the pace toward positive results, and to act in accordance with the agreement. Hesitation will lead to things that we do not want, he said.

Touching on the Arab state of affairs, Musa remarked that it is neither positive nor healthy, adding: It is undoubtedly an unhealthy situation and we cannot let it continue.

Referring to the recent tripartite summit in Alexandria, he said that its final statement stressed three points. They are: the need to sustain the Arab League as a framework for joint Arab action and to develop a framework for joint Arab economic action; the call on Arab states to embark on bilateral efforts to end disputes between them and establish positive cooperation; and the establishment of Arab solidarity in the various political and economic spheres within the Arab League framework.

The foreign minister affirmed that Egypt is holding to the Damascus Declaration and trying to push it forward. He explained that Egypt submitted a working paper on cooperation among the eight signatories to achieve a kind of integration among them, guarantee effectiveness, and avoid exaggerated formulas.

Speaking about cooperation with the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA], Musa said that Egypt reached out for the Maghreb states to establish communication and that they welcomed it as an observer. He noted that the UMA will hold a meeting to consider ways to facilitate Egypt joining as an observer.

'Amr Musa said that Egypt attended the last meeting in Algiers as a guest, pointing out that "we were late in establishing channels of communication with the AMU."

Touching on the regional situation, Musa said: Supposing that peace is already achieved, we have to consider the regional system that will embrace all states. He stressed the need for stability as a basic prerequisite in the region. We have to know what is going on in Israel in the nuclear sphere; we demand clarity, discipline, and control in that matter. Any other excuses are unacceptable and Egypt rejects this, Musa stressed.

Reviewing the issue of cooperation with Mediterranean states, Musa pointed out that there is an inclination to set up a free-trade zone of European littoral states early in the century.

He added that European littoral states will hold a meeting in November to study the matter. Noting that Egypt is a pioneer in that area, he recalled that it took part in many seminars in Europe. He explained that the goal of participation is to achieve interaction and positive cooperation.

Touching on Egypt's relations with Sudan, he affirmed that it is more than a sister state. Pointing out that it is erratic to undermine this relationship, Musa said: We are trying to bypass this negative stage. But the matter requires a review of the policies they tried to pursue recently, he remarked.

As far as Iran is concerned, Musa said, it is a fraternal Muslim state that has its significance in the region. But there are certain requirements to be met within the framework of Arab relations, such as the three islands of the United Arab Emirates and extremism in the region, Musa said.

Musa welcomed Iraq's recognition of the state of Kuwait, saying that this is an important and positive step that should not be taken lightly. He stressed, however, that the resolutions of international legitimacy must be implemented, emphasizing the need to end the tragedy involving the Iraqi people and pointing out that the Iraqi people's sufferings hurt us. He emphasized the importance of maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity, affirming that it is inconceivable to accept Iraq's partition. Any attempt in that direction will be faced with strong and firm objection, he said.

The foreign minister affirmed that the Foreign Ministry is careful to provide services to and support the just demands of Egyptian expatriates. He noted that instructions have been given to facilitate their affairs, pointing out that it is important that expatriates get in touch with the Egyptian embassies abroad to notify them of their whereabouts.

Finally, the foreign minister touched on Egyptian-African relations. He said that an African meeting will be held at the foreign ministers level in April to study social development in Africa, in addition to other foreign policy issues.

'Strategists' Call For Arab Nuclear Weapons Program

NC1001113795 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 23 Dec 94 pp 1, 6

[Report by Muna Yasin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian strategists have called for us to begin in earnest an Egyptian and Arab nuclear weapons program unless Israel commits itself to signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. During a seminar on this issue held in Cairo on Wednesday [21 December], attending experts revealed that the United States and Israel are pressuring Egypt to sign the treaty when it comes up for renewal in 1995.

Major General Ahmad 'Abd-al-Halim, a military expert at the al-Ahram Strategic Studies Center, said that a U.S. State Department official visited Cairo recently and hinted that Egypt might face sanctions, including a halt in U.S. aid, unless it complies with the attempts to renew the treaty.

Dr. Karim Mahmud, an Egyptian Foreign Ministry official with the rank of ambassador, warned that signing the NPT, which was first concluded in 1970, would mean that Egypt and the other countries in the region would live under an Israeli nuclear shadow, which is justified by allusions to an alleged Iranian threat.

Strategist Dr. 'Isam Jalal spoke about the topsy-turvy situation produced by the treaty. He noted that some countries that had signed it, like Iraq and North Korea, were later subjected to pressures and restrictions by countries who had refused to sign it, notably Israel, which continues to enjoy every possible assistance in building its nuclear program. He said that all Western countries are contributing to the Israeli nuclear arsenal. On the other hand, he pointed out, these Western countries have not fulfilled the promises they made in 1970 when they were persuading various countries to sign the treaty. The promises included assisting these countries in building civilian nuclear power plants.

The seminar, organized by the al-Bajawash Society for Strategic Studies, presented a detailed review of the U.S. attempts to cajole the signatory countries into signing a resolution extending the treaty indefinitely. This would bind their hands, prevent them from building a civilian or military nuclear capability, and make them the target of sanctions and inspections.

The seminar also exposed the U.S. insistence on renewing the NPT before renewing a treaty banning nuclear tests. This would mean that non-nuclear countries would remain non-nuclear while the nuclear powers would remain free to continue carrying out nuclear tests.

Muslim Brotherhood Accused of Helping 'Terrorism'

NC0901202295 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 7 Jan 95 p 1

[Report by Ahmad Musa in Tunis]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stressed that the security situation in Egypt is good and that police have the initiative in the confrontation with the terrorists and extremists. The scattered terrorist operations are worthless, meant only to prove that the terrorists still exist, he said.

In statements made before leaving Tunis for Cairo after attending the Arab interior ministers conference, al-Alfi said the security services are not worried at the situation in Upper Egypt.

He said police forces in the region are operating competently and confidently because they depend on a precise system and careful planning based on a definitive data base on the magnitude of terrorist moves.

Al-Alfi added: "No one can say that we have eliminated terrorism." He said: These kinds of crimes are still being perpetrated, and what matters for us is how to confront them and abort operations while they are being planned, which is actually happening. He praised the efficiency of the security services, saying they reached a high level of training that the whole world appreciates. [passage omitted]

The interior minister stressed that the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood plays a very clear role in supporting the terrorist groups. He said the Muslim Brotherhood shares the same objective with the International Organization of Muslim Brotherhood, which uses religion as a screen in its attempt to overthrow the ruling regimes in the Arab and Islamic countries.

He said this organization supports, helps, and backs the terrorist movements.

He said Egypt is taking the necessary measures to confront this activity, including attempts to infiltrate the country. [passage omitted]

72 Suspected 'Militants,' Weapons Seized

NC1001065995 Paris AFP in English 0130 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Jan 10 (AFP)—Egyptian security forces arrested 72 suspected Islamic militants in Upper Egypt on Monday and seized a large amount of arms and ammunition, the semi-official daily AL-AKHBAR reported in its Tuesday edition.

The arrest of the activists in the region of Bani Suwayf came during a massive security operation in the area, said AL-AKHBAR which described the activists as "some of the most dangerous terrorist elements".

Sixty weapons and a large quantity of ammunition were seized by police, the report said.

The province of Bani Suwayf had been largely unaffected by the Islamic fundamentalist violence until now. It lies just north of al-Minya province where the Islamic militant organisation al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group] has set up its new headquarters in Mallawi region.

Since January 2 when 11 people - eight policemen and three civilians - were killed in an attack by Islamic militants in al- Minya province, security forces have multiplied raids and arrests in fundamentalist ranks.

3 'Active Terrorist Elements' Killed

NC0901141895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Asyut, 9 Jan (MENA)—Three active terrorist elements were killed today at a deserted site in the village of Saw in Markaz Dayrut, Asyut Governorate.

The information available confirms that the terrorists were hiding in a deserted area. When police surrounded the hideout they were met with shooting, which forced them to respond to the source of fire.

The terrorists were killed in the exchange of fire. They were identified as: Muhammad 'Ali Jamal-al-Din Isma'il, a student at the al-Azhar Institute from Bani Husayn in Asyut and an active terrorist element; 'Uthman 'Imran Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Al, a student at the Agricultural Institute from Juhaynah in Suhaj; and Mahmud Ibrahim Ahmad al-Ghatrifi, a 20-year-old graduate of a vocational secondary school.

The police found two automatic rifles and a Hulwan pistol next to the bodies of the terrorists.

The prosecution has been notified to launch an investigation.

Police Sentry Shot Dead; Perpetrators Flee

NC0901215595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2125 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—Regular police sentry Ibrahim Abu-Dayf Mustafa was martyred tonight after he was shot at by unknown gunmen outside his home in 'Izbat al-'Adli, which belongs to Markaz Mallawi in the Governorate of al-Minya.

A security source stated that the perpetrators fled the scene of the crime after opening fire.

Officials from the al-Minya Security Department, various investigation bureaus, and the Criminology Department went to the scene of the crime to inspect the evidence.

The police continue their efforts to search for the perpetrators. The prosecution has been informed to start investigations.

Libya

Anti-Libyan Views of 'London Radio' Criticized

LD1001142695 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Sudanese citizen has attacked the English intelligence radio which is known as London Radio and said that this radio is not dealing with news objectively, particularly news concerning the Great Jamahiriyah. In a letter he sent to the radio, he said that this radio is misleading the public, concealing the truth, and falsely accusing the great 1 September revolution in Libya, which is being hailed by all Arabs as a great revolution.

Sudan

Iranian Envoy Presents Credentials, Lauds Ties

LD0701183995 Tehran IRNA in English 1826 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, Jan. 7, OANA-IRNA—Iranian ambassador to Khartoum, Mehdi Marvi here on Saturday [7 January] handed over his credentials to President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir of Sudan.

Marvi said that expansion of ties with the Muslim states and the Third World has been on the top agenda of Iran's diplomacy since the culmination of the Islamic revolution and that Sudan enjoyed a special place in its Islamic background and deep Islamic culture.

He said that the two countries could serve a good example of brotherly cooperation in view of the Islamic teachings.

Referring to the conspiracies against the two Islamic revolutions in Iran and Sudan, he emphasized the need for strengthening of cooperation between the two states to foil these plots. Al-Bashir said that Sudan was proud of having special relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and that cooperation between the two countries was based on strong pillars, mutual interest and understanding.

The Sudanese president also said the sensitivity of the situation around the two countries required exchange of views and further coordination to implement progressive plans with self-confidence among the states in the south.

President al-Bashir Praises Ties With PRC

EA0601184095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, this morning inaugurated the friendship hospital in Omdurman built by the Chinese Government as part of the celebrations marking the country's glorious independence anniversary. The ceremony was attended by His Excellency (Yang Wen Shan), the deputy minister for foreign trade and international economic cooperation of the PRC.

After inspecting various sections of the hospital, the president of the Republic expressed his appreciation for the timely completion of the Chinese project. He stressed that Sudanese-Chinese relations were deep-rooted.

The Chinese deputy minister for foreign trade addressed participants during the ceremony, stressing that relations between Sudan and China were unique and distinguished. He said his country's support for Sudan would continue in the interest of maintaining these relations.

Federal Health Minister Martin Galwak Deng also spoke at the ceremony, and discussed some of the projects in Sudan financed by the Chinese Government. He said that the friendship hospital was a manifestation of the deep-rooted relations between the two countries, and pointed out that the hospital would serve all the people of Sudan. [passage omitted]

Vice President Hails Ties With Libya

EA0801170095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning the Council of Ministers, chaired by the president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, heard a briefing from the first vice president, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, on the outcome of the meetings of the Arab-Sudanese-Libyan integration committee.

His excellency said that the committee meetings could be considered a leap forward in relations between the two countries. He added that the agreements concluded between the two sides revealed clarity of vision. His excellency described the talks as scientific and practical.

He added that the door to trade between the two countries had been opened, with the focus on joint popular investment. His excellency also referred to the Libyan people's praise for the transformation created by the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution in development, construction, and stability of the political system.

SPLA-United Reportedly Laying Down Arms

EA0601195995 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Underground leaders of the United faction of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA-United] in Wahdah [Unity] state have expressed a serious desire to lay down their arms and participate in peace efforts from within the country. This was announced by Mr. Abdullah Kamgai, the commissioner of Lir District in Wahdah state. He said this step came after several rounds of talks between the government of Wahdah state and the United faction. He confirmed that these talks were successful and that there was a huge influx into the state of returnees from the rebel movement. He pointed out that last week alone there were 700 returnees.

He also said that that district had made tremendous progress in implementing development programs, such as establishing peace villages. He also added that 10 centers for comprehensive missionary activities had been opened.

The commissioner called on the citizens of Wahdah state currently living in camps for the displaced in Khartoum state, to return to their homes and participate in development programmes in the state.

Garang Views Government 'Mistakes'

NC0901170495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 9 Jan (MENA)—Colonel John Garang, commander of the so-called Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA] in the south, has accused the Sudanese Government of deceiving the people on the real situation in the south.

He said that his troops inflicted heavy losses on government troops, pointing out that more than 1,000 government soldiers of the Khaybar Brigade have been killed by his men.

In an interview with the [London-based] AL-ITTIHADI AL-DUWALIYAH to be published tomorrow, Tuesday, Garang said that government troops control only very small points in southern Sudan up to the Nubiyah Mountains. We are trying to and will destroy them, he said.

Garang attributed the shift of the balance of power in the Sudanese civil war in favor of his troops to a number of fatal mistakes the Sudanese Government made, including the distribution of its troops on far-apart points. He described as "a crime" the government's reliance in the front on people who lack the necessary experience and supplies.

Garang affirmed that his movement, SPLA, insists on Sudan's unity as a primary and favored choice. We do not fight to protect the existing Sudan, which pursued a policy of discrimination against us and Nubiyah, he said, adding: We have to establish a new Sudan on the basis of equality and justice.

Garang pointed out that the agreement the SPLA signed recently with the Sudanese opposition, the al-Ummah Party, falls in that context. He said that talking about self-resolution or a confederation is conducive to a united Sudan.

In the interview, Garang expressed his belief that the leaders of the members states in IGADD [Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development], who are sponsoring the Sudanese peace talks, might lead the issue into internationalization. However, he stressed the need for IGADD states to continue their efforts on the bases of the Declaration of Principles that was accepted by all parties. He also stressed the need for expanding the scope of dialogue to include other political powers in the north.

At the end of the interview, Garang called on the Arab and African nations to contribute to relief efforts being extended to civil war victims in the south. He pointed out that the civil war has resulted in a tragedy involving thousands of civilians who have a pressing need for assistance.

Opposition Granted 'Facilities' in Eritrea

MM0301161395 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 31 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Nizar Daw-al-Na'im: "Sudanese Opposition Obtains 'Facilities' in Eritrea"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London—Well-informed Sudanese sources have confirmed that the Eritrean authorities have granted Sudanese opposition leaders facilities to help them to intensify their opposition activities against President 'Umar al-Bashir.

Sudanese opposition sources have said that Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki received a Sudanese opposition delegation comprising leaders of three major Sudanese political forces. And that an agreement was reached between the two sides as regards providing facilities for the Sudanese opposition's work.

The sources declined to specify the nature of these facilities. However, some people acquainted with Sudanese affairs expect these facilities to include "a radio station aimed at Sudan and transmitting from inside Eritrean territory, opening an office for the opposition, and granting it freedom of movement."

It is not clear whether the agreement will also include facilities for military action against al-Bashir.

Eritrea accuses Sudan of supporting the Eritrean "Islamic Jihad" group and of providing it with training camps and facilities to enable it to launch its military operations against Afewerki's government from inside Sudanese territory.

AL-HAYAH has learned that a number of leading Sudanese figures who participated in the meeting—among them John Garang, leader of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement; Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party; Dr. 'Umar Nur-al-Da'im, secretary general of the Ummah party; and Mubarak al-Mahdi, official in charge of external action in the party—departed Asmara yesterday.

The opposition sources expressed optimism after hearing the news about the signing of the agreement, saying that "it could help to push events and speed up the downfall of al-Bashir's regime." The sources said that Eritrea's geographical position and the demographic interlinkage on the border will help opposition activities against the Sudanese Government.

The sources said that information obtained from inside Sudan says that, immediately after the failure of the mediation endeavors between the two countries sponsored by [Yemeni] President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, the Sudanese authorities began to "impose security measures in east Sudan, especially near the border areas."

The sources added that Khartoum is thinking of establishing a security belt in the area and granting new facilities to the Eritrean "Islamic Jihad" group, such as settling numbers of its supporters near the border to contribute to establishing a security zone. [passage omitted]

President Appoints New State Officials

EA0901204795 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 2245 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, has issued a Republican decree appointing Mr. Rahamah Muhammad Ali commissioner of the Nyala Governorate and Mr. Uthman Qadim Ahmad commissioner of the Fashir Governorate.

His excellency also issued a Republican decree relieving the ministers of the following states from their posts:

They are Ahmad al-Bashar al-Hasan, the minister of peace and reconstruction in Jonglei State; (Philip Faralet Gin), the minister of finance and economic development in Jonglei State; (Jack Peter Laku), the minister of health and social affairs in Bahr al-Jabal State; Munir Awad Somit, the minister of education and guidance in Bahr al-Jabal State; and (Jacinto Liziki), the minister of agriculture and animal wealth in Western Bahr al-Ghazal.

The president of the Republic also issued a Republican decree appointing the following ministers to these posts: Ahmad al-Bashar al-Hasan, minister of finance and economic development in Jonglei State; (Philip Faralet Gin), minister of peace and reconstruction in Jonglei State; Ahmad Yunis Loro, minister of education and guidance in Bahr al-Jabal State, Jum'ah Sa'id Wajo, minister of health and social affairs in Bahr al-jabal State; and (Antony Abudina), minister of agriculture and animal wealth in Western Bahr al-Ghazal State.

Presidential Decree Appoints 26 Assembly Members

EA0801165795 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, has issued a Republican decree appointing the following persons to the Transitional National Assembly.

They are: Mr. 'Abd-al-Hakam Tayfur, Mr. al-Shaykh (Kwal Anat), retired Major General Kamal Hasan Ahmad, Mr. Ahmad 'Abd-al-Qadir Arbab, Mr. Abdun (Torkonj), Mr. 'Umar Muhajir Muhammadayn, Mr. Simon (Moresh), Mr. Sa'id Abdullah, Mr. (Akin Malwal Akin), Mrs. Salwa al-Bur'i, Mr. Jack Peter (Laku), Mr. Munir Awad (Somit), Mr. Ali Adam Hasan Nimir, Mr. Ya'qub Isa Jufun, rtd. Maj. Gen. Mu'tasim 'Abd-al-Wahhab, Mr. Tawm 'Abd-al-Qadir, Mr. Isma'il Muhammad Musa, Mr. Muhammad Badri Abu-Hadiyah, Mr. (Jacinto Liziki), Mr. Paul (Akok Saprino), Mr. (Emmanuel Bol Kwanin), Mr. Hamad al-Zubayr Hamad al-Malik, Mr. Taysir Muddathir, Mr. Abdullah Muhammad al-Hasan (Kambal), Mr. Ahmad 'Uthman (al-Sabki), Mr. Ja'far (Kambal) 'Abd-al-Rahim.

This decree takes effect from the date of its signing.

Ban Lifted on Importation of Cars, Sugar

AB0701180795 Paris AFP in English 1506 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, Jan 7 (AFP)—The Sudanese Industry and Commerce Ministry has lifted a ban on a range of prohibited goods with the main exceptions being liquor, gambling equipment and unlicensed arms and ammunition, state-run Radio Omdurman reported Saturday [7 January].

The earlier banned goods included all types of vehicles and basic supplies such as sugar, electrical and electronic equipment.

The ministry said car imports would be restricted to models not older than three years and trucks, buses and other public transport vehicles not older than eight years [illegible]

Sugar could be imported on permission granted by the ministry, the radio added.

Tunisia

Foreign Ministry on Situation in Chechnya

LD0801142295 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 8 Jan 95

[Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "with regard to the deterioration of the situation in the republic of Chechnya" on 8 January]

[FBIS Translated Text] With great concern, Tunisia is following the recent developments in Chechnya and expresses its extreme regret over the scale of the deterioration of the situation and the innocent victim fallen behind.

Proceeding from its eagerness to implement the principle of resolving all forms of conflict by peaceful means, congruent with the call issued by the recent Islamic summit in Casablanca and due to the great importance the international community attaches to the respect for human rights, Tunisia urges the parties concerned to resort to the language of dialogue and to seek a solution for this dilemma by negotiation and putting an end to the military escalation to prevent bloodshed.

Bahrain

Popular Front Leader on Recent Disturbances

NC0701122995 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 2 Jan 95 p 9

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Nu'aymi, secretary general of the Bahraini Popular Front, by Sa'id Sayf in Manama; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Sayf] How did the recent events in Bahrain start and what was their background?

[Al-Nu'aymi] The events were not spontaneous but were the outcome of popular resentment of the government's policies, especially the policy of repression and terrorism carried out by the security services under the supervision of British officers, including Albriani Henderson [name as transliterated].

Since the dissolution of the National Council in 1975, the national and Islamic movement has been calling for the restoration of the constitution and parliamentary life and for a halt to detention, torture, and the banishment of citizens from the country. In 1994 a delegation of six national and Islamic figures submitted to the ruler of the country a petition signed by over 200 prominent political, religious, and social figures demanding the restoration of parliamentary life.

Three months ago scores of prominent national and Islamic figures met publicly and peacefully in Bahrain and drafted a memorandum summing up the urgent demands of the Bahraini people at this time. These demands included the restoration of parliamentary life, release of political prisoners, safeguarding of the people's rights, repatriation of hundreds of deportees, and alleviation of unemployment. In the past two months Bahrain has witnessed demonstrations by unemployed people demanding the government secure work for over 30,000 citizens who are complaining about competition from nearly 80,000 foreign workers and allow women to participate in political life.

This is the background of the events. However, the straw that broke the camel's back was the arrest of the honorable Shaykh 'Ali Salman, who, like other honorable shaykhs, urged citizens at a mosque to sign a petition and got many signatures for it. The authorities arrested him at the beginning of December. Rumors circulated that he had been martyred under torture, which set off popular fury. The government's response was to open fire on the demonstrators, which compelled the masses to react. They buried their martyrs and have continued demonstrations and marches up to the present time. The masses have demanded compliance with the demands contained in the petition as a condition for the return of the situation to normal.

[Sayf] The events coincided with the Gulf Summit, which prompted some to consider them a message to the Gulf rulers. How do you view this coincidence?

[Al-Nu'aymi] Yes, it is a message to the Gulf rulers. The masses in all the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states demand a state of law and of constitutional institutions, the recognition of public freedoms, and that the rulers be under constitutional supervision. The Sultanate of Oman launched a widespread arrest campaign after the multilateral committee on waters met at the beginning of 1994. The governments of Qatar and Bahrain defied national feelings by hosting the arms committee in Doha and the environment committee in Bahrain. The rulers of Bahrain persisted in offering services to the Zionists, thus unleashing popular fury at a government that takes orders from Washington and disregards the interests of the people and the Arab nation alike. Therefore, it was natural that the uprising focused on the points of weakness in the Bahraini regime in particular and other Gulf regimes in general. They [Gulf rulers] should have discussed the real reasons for extremism. They would have found that they are extremists in their subservience, repression, and violation of human rights, both of their own nationals, other Arab citizens, and foreigners. Undoubtedly, the reports published by AL-'ARABI on the treatment of Egyptians in Saudi Arabia is an example of this.

[Sayf] How do you assess the results of the Gulf summit?

[Al-Nu'aymi] Regrettably, the Gulf leaders who met while events were taking place around them had failed to solve such simple issues as border problems, economic cooperation, and Gulf security. They believe that the United States can maintain the status quo and therefore will not allow the changes desired by the people of the region. They continue to submit to U.S. dictates even when this requires the issuance of religious fatwas, such as the fatwa of Mufti 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Baz sanctioning visits to Jerusalem and conciliation with the Zionist enemy.

The events in Bahrain are a red flag to all. We hope that the message will get through and will play a positive role in convincing everyone of the need for reform and to stop leveling accusations at foreign states.

[Sayf] There have been reports that the movement is Shiite and supported from abroad. To what extent is this true?

[Al-Nu'aymi] The overwhelming majority (70 percent) of the Bahraini people are Shiite. Therefore, it is natural that they have played a key role in all the national movements in the country since the start of this century and in all the uprisings. Everybody (Shiites and Sunnis) have stood in the same rank demanding the government comply with the document signed by nearly 25,000 citizens from various towns and villages and from the various national and Islamic tendencies. It can be said that it is a national consensus document.

At the same time, we say that the government is carrying out an ugly sectarian discrimination policy against the overwhelming majority of citizens and is depriving them of their means of livelihood. It insults them when it accuses them—and they are true Arabs and Muslims—of receiving orders from abroad. This accusation is rejected. Our people have been accustomed to hearing this accusation during all uprisings.

[Sayf] How do you believe the current crisis can be resolved and how can the current situation end?

[Al-Nu'aymi] There is no alternative to dialogue and to trying all those who caused the deaths of hundreds and the arrest of thousands of citizens, and the expulsion of the British mercenaries, especially Mr. Henderson, the general director of public security, who was behind the assassination of many strugglers under torture.

We believe the government must announce its readiness to start a dialogue with the national and Islamic figures in order to find solutions to the problems that triggered off the events.

Kuwait

Minister Downplays Move by France To Resume Iraqi Ties

LD0701155195 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1452 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 7 Jan (KUNA)—Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad today said that France's plan to open an interest section in Baghdad does not change its firm demand from Iraq to fulfil all the conditions relating to the Kuwait liberation war. In a comment here to KUNA, he said that "this step by France does not alter its insistence that Baghdad should implement all relevant UN Security Council resolutions." He belittled the significance of the French measure by saying: "We should not give this matter any semblance of extreme importance, which it does not deserve. We should remember that Paris, until now, is committed to UN resolutions." He pointed out that he had received a letter to this effect from French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe. [passage omitted]

In reply to a question by KUNA, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad reaffirmed that the French decision would not affect Kuwait's relations with Paris, nor does it represent a violation of the UN resolutions; in fact it could be a catalyst which will work for the containing of many matters. But he did not specify which. He said: "Before we ask about the French step, let us not forget that many states have opened their embassies in Baghdad; not interest sections under the flags of other states." He recalled the prominent role played by France within the forces of the international alliance, under the command of the United States, which saved Kuwait from an Iraqi occupation that lasted for seven months, beginning August 1990. Shaykh Sabah added:" We should highly appreciate the stance taken by France and the role it played in the politico-military field for the liberation of Kuwait." [passage omitted]

Daily Criticizes French Plan

LD0801112195 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0900 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 8 Jan—A Kuwaiti newspaper today criticized France's announcement to open an interest section in Baghdad and said it will encourage Iraq to procrastinate implementing UN Security Council resolutions issued against it.

In its editorial, the English-language KUWAIT TIMES pointed out that France's belief that opening an office to look after its interests will give it an opportunity to pressure Iraq to implement Security Council resolutions is "unacceptable."

The paper said that with the sanctions on Iraq in force it is easy to decide from abroad whether Iraq is abiding with the Security Council resolutions, and points out that the United Nations has the appropriate means to verify whether Iraq is complying with international resolutions.

Concluding its editorial, the paper urged the allied countries not to give in to economic temptation and said "it is important that international community principles override economic interests."

In a statement made to the newspaper AL-SIYASAH today, Henri Daragon, French ambassador to Kuwait, said his country's decision to establish an interest section in Baghdad is a technical one aimed mainly at resolving the administrative problems resulting from the closure of the embassy in 1991.

He denied that the French decision will have any effect on his country's position on Iraq inside the Security Council, saying "our position toward Iraq will remain the same and will depend on the way the Iraqi Government develops its stance." [passage omitted]

UN Urged To Keep Pressuring Iraq to Release Prisoners

LD1001113395 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The State of Kuwait has sent a message to the UN Security Council urging the Council members to continue their principled stances and earnest efforts to compel the Iraqi regime to release Kuwaiti and other nationals held by the Iraqi regime as hostages and prisoners of war.

The message stressed the particular need for Iraq to earnestly implement the clauses of Resolution 949 of 1994 and all other UN Security Council resolutions to prove its peaceful intentions toward the State of Kuwait and neighboring countries, and in a way that will lead to entrenching the pillars of security and stability in the Gulf region.

The message sent by the State of Kuwait's mission at the United Nations to the UN Security Council yesterday said that the Iraqi regime's decision to recognize the State of Kuwait's sovereignty, independence, and borders was a step that must be followed by others in the direction of an earnest implementation of all the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The message stressed that the issue of prisoners of war and hostages was one of the issues to which the State of Kuwait attaches utmost importance due to its purely humanitarian nature.

Iran's Hashemi-Rafsanjani Meets With Officials

Holds Talks With Council Chairman

LD1001111095 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0941 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 10 Jan—Undersecretary at the Iranian Foreign Ministry Mohammad Hashemi-Rafsanjani had a meeting here today with Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and chairman of the Council of Ministers. The meeting was attended by Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Sulayman Majid al-Shahin and Iranian ambassador to Kuwait Gholam San'ati. [passage omitted]

Amir Urges Expansion of Ties

LD1001114995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our country's deputy foreign minister [Mohammad Hashemi-Rafsanjani], currently visiting Kuwait, met and conferred with the Kuwaiti amir and that country's foreign minister yesterday. At the meeting with the amir of Kuwait, Mr. Mohammad Hashemi stressed the Islamic Republic of Iran's serious determination to create understanding in the Persian Gulf region and to provide joint security for the regional countries.

The amir of Kuwait, for his part, asked for closer cooperation among countries of the region. He also expressed delight over the level of ties between the two countries and stressed the need for their expansion.

Saudi Arabia

Defense Minister Denies Aid Being Sent to Chechnya

NC0701181395 Paris AFP in English 1617 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Jan 7 (AFP)—Saudi Arabia denied Saturday [7 January] that it had sent aid to Chechen fighters and said the conflict should be solved by dialogue.

Defence Minister Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud told journalists that his country "is not supplying any aid to the Chechen fighters, rejects the use of force and considers that a solution will be reached by dialogue."

On Wednesday Moscow called on Afghanistan, Iran, Jordan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to stop trying to recruit "mercenaries" to fight alongside the Chechens.

Russian troops sent to the breakaway Caucasus republic on December 11 unleashed their heaviest artillery barrage backed with air raids on Saturday leaving the presidential palace ablaze.

Condemns Russian Actions in Chechnya

LD0801211795 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Following his opening of the environment exhibition of the Saudi environment awareness project yesterday, his royal highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation and inspector general, held a news conference in which he answered the press questions. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] You have pointed out the role of media in bringing out the facts of the role of Saudi Arabia, upon which God has bestowed the blessings of Islam. From this starting point allow me to ask some questions that are removed from the environmental issues. First, Russia has alleged that Saudi Arabia is giving aid to Chechnya. What is your highness's comment on this allegation?

[Sultan] First of all, Saudi Arabia denounces this action by the Soviet Union [as heard] against Chechnya. Saudi Arabia has always observed human rights and considers that the positive solutions in all issues stem from dialogue and discussions. Saudi Arabia has no contacts or aid at all outside the region of Arab and Islamic nations. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Your Highness, the news agencies announced that a Saudi-Yemeni meeting was held last Monday to discuss the joint borders. Does your highness consider the situation between Saudi Arabia and Yemen has stabilized, and do you expect the visit by Yemeni President 'Ali Abdallah Salih to take place soon?

[Sultan] I believe Yemeni-Saudi relations are good, even if in the past they were somewhat tense. Saudi Arabia was not responsible for that. We always consider that good-neighborliness is one of the basics of the Islamic faith. That is why the contacts are continuing between the custodian of the two holy mosques and President 'Ali Salih. The contacts are continuing in order to serve the interests of the two countries under the umbrella of right, law, and legitimate rights of both sides.

[Correspondent] Another question. Shortly, some of the defense ministers—the British defense minister, then the Spanish defense minister—will visit Saudi Arabia during the coming two weeks. Does this mean that there other arms deals with these countries?

[Sultan] As I said before, the defense or other ministers who visit Saudi Arabia are not arms merchants. We are not centers for absorbing weapons or for exporting money for weapons. The exchanged visits between the concerned officials are either aimed at emphasizing the good relations between countries, or at following up past projects in order to improve them or benefit from them. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Syria's al-Shar' Hands Message to King Fahd

LD0901235195 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2300 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 9 Jan—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect him, has received a message from his brother His Excellency Hafiz al-Asad, president of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The message was conveyed to the custodian of the two holy mosques by His Excellency Faruq al-Shar', the Syrian foreign minister during an audience at the al-Yamamah Palace this evening. [passage omitted]

Commentary Blames Tehran for Commander's Death

LD0701225495 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 7 Jan 95

["News and Comment" program prepared by Husayn al-'Askari and presented by Bakr Bakhaybar]

[FBIS Translated Text] Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you. The commander of Tehran regime's Air Force and a group of senior commanders were killed yesterday when their military plane blew up on a flight from Tehran to Isfahan. The finger of accusation has been pointed at the ruling regime, which is used to getting rid of its opponents by various means.

The death of the Iranian Air Force commander in the military aircraft accident with a group of his command staff re-opens the gate to the Tehran regime's resort to the physical annihilation of its opponents.

The killing of opponents occupies a prominent place in the plans and concerns of the ruling regime in Tehran, which defends its existence in many ways; foremost among which is to get rid of its opponents either by placing them under house arrest or detaining them in prisons. Quite often the regime has announced the death of some of those under mysterious circumstances, which were hushed up.

On the basis of the ruling regime's scheme to resort to the physical liquidation of its opponents, the regime has not stopped at killing its opponents inside Iran. It has resorted to sending execution squads to where its opponents lived after they had fled from the hell of the oppressive regime.

News of the killing abroad of opponents of the Tehran rule by execution squads sent by the Tehran regime under the guise of diplomatic and trade missions have often been reported. Some of these squads have been arrested by the police in a number of European countries.

On the basis of the indiscriminate criminal background, the Tehran regime continues to kill whoever opposes it. Therefore, the death of the air force commander and some of his command staff in the military plane crash is an episode in the regime's scheme to get rid of anyone who demonstrates opposition to the ruling clique.

Undoubtedly, the ruling regime had sensed that the loyalty of the air force commander to the regime had become lukewarm, and perhaps the man had expressed his annoyance about the regime's practices, which are pushing Iran toward an abyss. It was normal for the ruling regime to get rid of the air force commander, as it has done and would do with other opponents. However, justice will triumph in the end.

Commentator Views Tehran 'Power Struggle'

LD0901235095 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2230 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Commentary by Husayn al-'Askari; from the "Event and Comment" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The power struggle between the ruling regime in Tehran and the Iranian armed forces has come up to the surface soon after the regime excluded the Armed Forces from taking part in the work of the committee that was set up to investigate the mysterious crash of the plane that carried the Air Force chief. Despite the fact that the power struggle—which has been going on for a long time between the Iranian Armed Forces and the so-called guardians of the revolution, a struggle which the ruling regime in Tehran has been trying to black out, their efforts failing because the death of the Air Force chief and five of his chiefs of staff who perished in the crash of his plane on Thursday [5 January]—has come to uncover what the Tehran regime has been trying to hide, despite the fact that these reports have leaked out to the Iranian street and to the outside world.

It is a well-known fact that the Tehran regime did not trust and still does not trust the Armed Forces' loyalty to the revolution, hence it has tried and still is trying to fragment the forces of the army by pensioning off the senior commanders and handing over their positions to commands that lack experience.

The ruling regime in Tehran also created the so-called revolutionary guards. These are nearer to militia rather than proper forces. It equipped them with modern weapons and spent lavishly on them to the extent that they became the influential force in opposition to the regular forces and also in order to use them in protecting the regime of the mullahs against any coup attempt by the regular forces.

The growing Armed Forces' resentment against the regime has inevitably been reflected in the relations of the Armed Forces with the revolutionary guards. These relations remained tense and the regime has been nurturing and encouraging this situation in an attempt to exploit the hatred between the two sides for its own benefit. The regime's existence depends on fanning enmities among the factions of the Iranian people.

The ruling regime in Tehran showed its lack of confidence in the Armed Forces by appointing a committee of mullahs to investigate the crash of the Air Force chief's plane. This matter confirmed what has been circulating in the Iranian street, namely, that behind the air crash, there is one factor which the Iranian regime has been trying to conceal so that the finger of accusation will not be pointed at elements inside the ruling regime.

'Aziz Arrives in U.S. for Working Visit to UN

JN0901180895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1735 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 9 Jan (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz arrived in New York today on a working visit to the United Nations following his official visit to France.

The deputy prime minister visited Paris and held official talks with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe. The talks resulted in a decision to open a French interests section in Baghdad. They also tackled bilateral relations and Iraq's relationship with the UN Security Council.

Tariq 'Aziz will hold talks with UN Security Council member states before the council begins its periodic review of the blockade imposed on Iraq.

Meets Russian UN Envoy

JN0901220895 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz began talks in New York with members of the UN Security Council as part of his current visit to the United Nations.

Tariq 'Aziz met with Ambassador Sergey Lavrov, the Russian permanent representative to the United Nations, at his place of residence. They discussed developments in the relationship between Iraq and the UN Security Council.

Later today, the deputy prime minister will meet with Ambassador Li Zhaoxing, the PRC permanent representative to the United Nations, and Ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimee, the French permanent representative to the United Nations.

U.S. 'Pretexts' Cites on French Interest Section

JN1001115095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0920 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 10 Jan (INA)—In an article today, BABIL says the pretexts advanced by the U.S. State Department by way of justifying its campaign against France's decision to open an interests section in Baghdad do not hold water and have nothing to do with the Security Council resolutions.

The paper adds that these pretexts sound naive and illogical, such as the U.S. argument that Iraq has failed to cooperate with the UN Special Commission while the monthly report of the chairman of the Special Commission does not say this.

The paper adds that the United States allows itself what it does not allow another major country that is a permanent member of the Security Council, and that it practices a policy of hegemony over the others to serve its interests, with total disregard for the sovereignty and interests of other nations.

The paper notes that while the U.S. says—through its State Department spokeswoman—that France's decision is not constructive or useful, it keeps a similar office in Baghdad.

The paper says that the U.S. rejection of any positive attitude by the Security Council toward Iraq stems from private considerations that concern it and its agents in the region. Oil plays a major role in this respect.

BABIL adds that this ugly position has not only deprived an entire people for five years of their most basic human needs but has also deliberately harmed the interests of other countries that have longstanding economic and political ties with Iraq and are eager to restore these ties on the basis of mutual interests. Hence, the importance of the French decision that opens prospects for reinstating a natural situation and supporting an international trend that has embarked on concrete action to have the Iraq oil embargo lifted.

The paper urges the states that have adopted positive stands depending on international law and reason to stick to their interests and uphold justice in order to remove the injustice done to the Iraqi people.

Letter Condemns 'New' U.S. 'Aggression'

JN0301213095 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 3 Jan (INA)—Iraq has strongly condemned a new U.S. military aggression against the Iraqi water transportation ship al-Tharthar.

This came in a letter sent today by Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's Permanent UN representative, to the UN secretary general.

Iraq's letter held the United States fully responsible for the consequences of this new aggression and asked the UN chief to intervene in accordance with the charter's provisions and condemn these acts of aggression and adopt the required measures to halt them and ensure their nonrecurrence.

Iraq made it clear that the U.S. Frigate No. 40 on 22 December 1994 approached the ship Tharthar that was docked within Iraqi territorial waters in al-'Amiq Port. A 12-man American military used a rubber boat and boarded and then inspected the ship and interrogated its crew and severed its communciations with coastal centers.

Nizar Hamdun also sent another message to the UN chief detailing Iran's continued violations of the ceasefire and the Tehran agreement governing the buffer zone between the two countries from 2 through 24 December 1994.

Letter Urges UN To Reconsider Use of Spy Planes

JN0601153495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1350 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 6 Jan (INA)—Iraq has informed the United Nations of the continued violation of its airspace by the U.S. U-2 spy plane on the pretext of conducting air surveys for the Special Commission.

In a letter in this regard to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali, Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said that the U.S. spy plane violated Iraqi airspace twice in December 1994, overflying vast areas of Iraq.

In his letter, the foreign minister said that the U.S. spy plane always took off from its base in Saudi Arabia and returned to the same base at the end of its mission.

In his letter, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said: Condemning and denouncing those violations of its airspace, Iraq reiterates that this plane is used for purposes other than those specified by the Security Council and that its activity harms Iraq's sovereignty and security,

At the conclusion of his letter, the foreign minister urged the United Nations to immediately reconsider the forced use of this plane to violate the Iraqi airspace in a way that contravenes the objectives and principles of the UN Charters regarding the need to respect sovereignty of all member states and to ensure equality among them.

U.S. Aircraft 'Violations' Protested to UN

JN0401144295 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraq has once again protested to the United Nations against U.S. aircraft violations of Iraq's airspace designed to provoke, surveil and drop flares.

In a protest memorandum addressed to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali yesterday, Iraq's permanent UN representative said these aircraft violated Iraq's airspace between 21-31 December by carrying out 664 hostile air sorties, in addition to several reconnaissance sorties and the dropping of flares.

Iraq's permanent representative asked that the memorandum be distributed as a UN security Council document.

'Violations' Protested to Arab League

JN0401143595 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraq has informed the Arab League that the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers' have continued to provide facilities for U.S., British, and French aircraft to violate Iraq's airspace. It said this poses a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter yesterday to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League said that after taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the aforementioned aircraft continued to violate Iraq's airspace between 24 and 31 December. These aircraft carried out 396 hostile sorties.

A detailed list of these violations was attached to the letter.

Radio: U.S. Summons Kurdish Representatives

NC0701171895 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD, mouthpiece of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], which is published on Saturdays in Arabic, has reported that the U.S. State Department summoned the representatives of the PUK and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] in the United States at 1600, Iraq time, yesterday and handed them a message to deliver to Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani regarding the current situation in the region of Kurdistan. The source who provided the report to AL-ITTIHAD did not disclose the contents of the message.

17 Kurdistan Parties Condemn Fighting

NC0501172495 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Seventeen Kurdistani parties issued a statement addressed to the people of Kurdistan in which they condemned the internecine fighting. They demanded a cease-fire in all parts of Kurdistan. They also asked that the third cabinet formation assume its responsibilities and that problems and disputes be resolved through dialogue as soon as possible.

The Kurdistani parties also asked that all the revenue of the Kurdistan region's government should be returned to the region's treasury and that the money should be used in a legal and legitimate manner by the government.

Kurdish 'Ministry' Urges People To Protest Fighting

JN0501214995 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1615 GMT 5 Jan 95

["Statement" by the Kurdish Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ministry; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Everyone knows that the occupation of government institutions by the armed men of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] in the city of Irbil is an action which contravenes religion and law. Moreover, the acts of killing, plundering, and terrorism against citizens in the city are inhuman. Based on this, it is necessary to make the following points:

1. The mosque imams and preachers in the city should denounce and expose these practices in their Friday sermons and on other occasions. They also should call for stopping fighting and terrorism.

2. Employees in the city should stage a strike to protest this abnormal situation and the actions against citizens in the city of Irbil, as well as the loss of security and stability.

Talabani Sends Cable to UINC Chief

NC0501182995 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Jan 95

["Text" of cable No. 85 by PUK Secretary General Jalal Talabani to Dr. Ahmad al-Shalabi, chairman of the Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi National Congress; dated 5 January 1995]

[FBIS Translated Text] I salute you and find it necessary to inform you of the following information:

1. At the beginning of the new year, Mr. Azaf Barwari visited the city of Mosul to finalize coordination with the Saddamite government.

2. On the nights of 1 and 2 January and 2 and 3 January, large amounts of equipment, bombs, and weapons were transferred to Dahuk using a Scania lorry truck with the license plate marking 50071/Nineveh. They were sent to the party [preceding word in English in reference to the Barzani-led Kurdistan Democratic Party—KDP] from the Iraqi Government.

3. On 19 December, Mr. Nayshervan, accompanied by Muhsin Dughi and others, visited the city of Ankara to coordinate efforts with the Turks and the Iraqi Government to confront the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the democratic experiment in Kurdistan.

4. The party, through its representative in Tehran and through Adham al-Barzani, who is playing the game of revolutionary Hizballah by coordinating with the party leadership, is attempting to drag [word indistinct] into the battlefield against the PUK.

5. The party is not adhering to the cease-fire agreement in the region of Choman and Galalah. It persists in carrying out repeated attacks every time it has the chance.

Finally, we ask you to form supervision committees for the cease-fire on all axes. We ask that you participate in the parliament's efforts to normalize conditions in Irbil since we cannot do without your efforts and presence in all committees and in all fields. Please accept our respects.

PUK's Talabani Said Willing To Observe Cease-Fire

NC0601163595 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], yesterday received a delegation representing the union of religion scholars in Kurdistan. During the meeting, brother Talabani affirmed that the PUK is ready to observe a cease-fire immediately. However, he noted that the Kurdistan Democratic Party must adopt the same stance because it is inconceivable to observe a cease-fire unilaterally.

PUK Radio Reports Shelling of Rawandoz by KDP

NC0601171795 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1650 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received this report:

The valiant city of Rawandoz is coming under artillery shelling from the [Barzani-led] Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], who are positioned in the hills opposite the city. As a result of this bestial shelling, a large number of innocent civilians have been martyred or injured. The families of the injured people are being prevented from taking the casualties to hospitals in Irbil and Suran. The KDP forces imposed a siege on the city and prevented foodstuffs and fuel from reaching it. This barbaric way of treating civilians, apart from threatening the life of the thousands residing in Rawandoz, shows the deep grudge held against the residents of this brave town, which used to be the capital of the emirate of Suran and throughout history remained steadfast in the face of occupiers and enemies.

KDP Forces Reportedly 'Purge' Areas

JN0801083295 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1630 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The heroes of the party [preceding word in English in reference to the Barzani-led Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP] and the Revolutionary Hizballah Party [RHP] have managed to fully purge the areas of Choman and Galalah. The (?Hamilton) road, from Hajj 'Umran to Irbil, is now under the control of the KDP forces. The joint forces of the KDP and RHP have seized five dushkas, a number of light weapons, and ammunition. The forces at the Galalah axis and the Choman axis converged today after purging the area. Our forces have confronted the successive attacks by the armed men of the [Patriotic] Union of [Kurdistan] [PUK] in the two areas of Balisan and Alan, and inflicted heavy losses on them.

Faithful citizens in Kurdistan, regrettably, we are compelled to mention some of the results of the attacks which were launched by the PUK forces. Over the past few days, several PUK attacks in Alan, Balisan, and Choman were repulsed, particularly at the Choman-Galalah axis. Heavy losses were inflicted on the PUK forces, and the area was fully purged of their forces.

Dear listeners, here are the details of this news:

Honorable citizens in Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk, and Zardiyan, in a cable on Friday, 6 January, RHP Leader Adham Barzani declared the joint victory which was achieved by the KDP and RHP heroes on the Choman-Galalah axis. Other news was received on the details of fighting at this axis, which erupted as a result of the PUK attacks on this area.

1. Today, Saturday, 7 January, the Barzan and Khamad forces and the Galalah axis converged with the Hajj 'Umran axis forces in the Nowpordan area.
2. According to the latest information, the defeated PUK forces left behind more than 60 dead. This is in addition to capturing tens of persons, some of whom fled toward the Qasrok area.
3. The defeated PUK forces were brought from outside the Choman area and from the PUK's special brigade.
4. Aside from those who were killed, a large number of people were wounded and others fled.
5. Citizens in Choman and its suburbs have joyously received the KDP and RHP heroes.
6. The joint forces seized three 14.5 dushkas and another two 12.5 dushkas, and a number of pieces of light weapons and equipment.
7. The situation in the area is calm, and the entire area is under the control of our heroic peshmergas.

Citizens in Kurdistan, the PUK leadership is responsible for the fighting which erupted at the Choman axis. The PUK forces have been launching attacks on our party's forces in the area.

It is worth mentioning that two weeks ago, Choman was under the control of our forces. After the situation in the area became complicated, a joint committee from the KDP and PUK left for Choman to normalize the situation. In response to the committee's decision, the KDP and PUK forces left the area. However, the PUK violated the decision once again, dispatched its forces to the area, and occupied, even our party's position. The PUK's treason has further complicated the situation in Choman and ignited fighting.

It is to be recalled that since the first of May until now, the PUK and its leaders have been exploiting the KDP's peaceful stand. They have also exploited the mediators as in (Kaftazan, Shawif), and Irbil.

The masses of Kurdistan and the mediators are aware of the PUK's violations. However, the KDP will not be deceived again by the PUK's promises. Thus, the PUK leadership will pay a dear price for its treason and attacks. The coup will backfire against its planners. The key to resolving problems starts from Irbil. The PUK armed men should evacuate the city of Irbil. The legitimacy of the government institutions, parliament, and the resources of the city of Irbil and Kurdistan should also be restored. The key to tackling the situation lies in the restoration of legitimacy, the legitimacy which the KDP is trying to impose by the force of arms. The city of Irbil should not become a battlefiled again. They [the PUK leaders] should pay the price. As always, we seek, by all means, to safeguard the holy places in the city of Irbil. Irbil is for all the masses of Irbil and for all nationalists. We will never allow Irbil to be controlled by injustice and dictatorship. This coup will also backfire against those who are behind it.

Kurdish Parties Draft 9-Point Plan To Ease Crisis

MM1001121295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Jan 95 p2

[Report by 'Adnan Husayn: "Renewal of Armed Confrontations Between Iraqi Kurds; Accusations Aimed at 'Non-Kurdish Parties'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—Armed clashes erupted again yesterday and the day before between the militias of the two Iraqi Kurdish leaders Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani in a number of areas where there was an uneasy truce after two weeks of heavy fighting which extended to Irbil, capital of the Iraqi Kurdish region. Sources from the two parties as well as Kurdish independent sources agree that the clashes of the past two days were "major and fierce."

A representative of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] (led by Talabani) told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday that the militia of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] (led by Barzani) launched major attacks on the PUK forces in the areas of Choman, Hajj 'Umran, and Jabal Bin Harir northeast of Irbil. Sami Shawrash said that the attack on Hajj 'Umran was launched "in cooperation with the Hizballah militia led by Adham Barzani, uncle of (KDP leader) Mas'ud Barzani." He said the attacks constituted "a violation of the cease-fire arranged by Dr. Ahmad al-Jalabi, chairman of the Executive Council of the Iraqi National Congress [INC]." He said that the PUK forces took a "position of self-defense" against these attacks. He added that "the PUK will not continue to maintain that position and to tolerate all these excesses." He hinted that "behind this insistence on continuation of the fighting, there is some role played by non-Kurdish parties in the area," but he refused to name them. Meanwhile, Hushyar Zibari, the KDP representative in London, has confirmed the outbreak of "very fierce battles in the Choman-Kalalah-Hajj 'Umran axis." He said that Talabani's forces which participated in these battles "were completely destroyed and dozens of their members were killed.... Our forces seized large quantities of arms and ammunition including heavy guns."

Zibari blamed Talabani's militia for the recent battles, noting that "the two sides had agreed to withdraw from Choman and render the roads passing through it safe for everyone, but no sooner had we withdrawn than they entered the area, thus breaking that agreement."

According to independent Kurdish sources in daily contact with the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan, fierce battles raged over the past two days between the two warring parties in Khalifah, Suran, Diyanah, Harir, Rawandoz, and Duli northeast of Irbil, and similar battles broke out in the area of Chamchamal between al-Sulaymaniyah and Karkuk. They added that dozens of people were killed in these battles, and emphasized that the situation "in all other areas is extremely tense."

As regards the efforts being made locally to resolve the crisis between the two parties to the conflict, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the Follow-up Committee, headed by Dr. al-Jalabi and including representatives of the parties of Barzani and Talabani, held a meeting Thursday in Irbil attended also by representatives of other Kurdish parties and members of the local Kurdish parliament, and drafted a nine-point plan to defuse the crisis and begin to normalize the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan to pave the way for an expected meeting between Barzani and Talabani. The plan provides for the following:

1. Consolidation of the cease-fire in Irbil and its suburbs.
2. Easing the military pressure on Irbil and its suburbs (where Barzani's party amassed large forces in areas close to the city).
3. Disengagement of forces in Irbil, its suburbs, and all Kurdish areas.
4. Reopening lines of transport between Irbil and other areas.
5. Putting an end to the pursuits and excesses.
6. Putting an end to the theft, looting, storming of homes, and arrests in Irbil, and punishing the culprits.
7. Withdrawing gunmen from Irbil to their previous positions outside the city.
8. Withdrawing the gunmen brought in from other governorates and sending them back to their previous positions.
9. Formation of a committee to implement the resolutions on the city of Irbil.

PUK, KDP Officials Agree on Cease-Fire Proposals

JN1001112195 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman, KDP political bureau member, and Dr. Fu'ad Ma'sum, PUK political bureau member, by correspondents Antoine Nawfal and Nabil Sabbagh on 9 January; from the "Panorama" feature—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Nawfal] Radio Monte Carlo today acts as a link between the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan] in the person of Dr. Fu'ad Ma'sum, PUK political bureau member, and the KDP [Kurdistan Democratic Party] in the person of Dr. Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman, KDP political bureau member, following the KDP's agreement last week, through Radio Monte Carlo, to PUK proposals, which in turn agreed, also through Radio Monte Carlo, to return to the state of affairs that existed before the fighting. Today, Radio Monte Carlo has succeeded in bringing the two officials together on the telephone to have them state their parties' stand on the proposed solution. Dr. Fu'ad, will you be the first to speak, and then Dr. Sami?

[Ma'sum] Thank you. There have been many attempts to end the bloody fighting in Kurdistan. Some of these attempts were local, made by the parties in the arena, and others were made by friends. Since yesterday, these attempts began to produce results. At a meeting between Jalal Talabani and Dr. Ahmad al-Jalabi, there was some kind of practical visualization on how to stop the fighting. Mr. Jalal submitted his proposals in writing to Dr. al-Jalabi who, in turn, contacted Mr. Mas'ud Barzani and met with him.

With Mr. al-Jalabi's return today and his second meeting with Mr. Talabani, the following formula was agreed on:

The first stage: [no second stage specified] Plan to halt fighting and normalize the situation in Irbil and its suburbs:

1. To Halt fighting in all parts of Kurdistan.

2. The Iraqi National Congress [INC] will assume responsibility for the (Gomaspan) road-Kaznazan junction as far as the (Rotgari) hospital which is in Irbil without there being any forces from either side along the road.

3. The situation in Irbil and suburbs will be normalized. This means the withdrawal of the forces which had come from al-Sulaymaniyah and Karkuk to their original positions, and the withdrawal of the PUK's Irbil forces to their regular positions; the withdrawal from the party checkpoints in the city within a period of five days from the moment the cease-fire is implemented. In exchange, the KDP forces around Irbil, and which have come from the Dahuk governorate will be withdrawn to their original positions. The KDP forces in the Irbil Governorate will be withrawn to their normal positions. Party checkpoints will be removed from the Irbil- Shaqlawah road within a five-day period after a cease-fire is announced.

4. The INC will assume responsibility for all the hospitals, institutes, and universities.

5. INC disengagement forces will be stationed between the forces on the fronts.

6. The officials from the two parties and their guards will enjoy freedom of movement in Irbil.

7. The INC will assume responsibility for the printing presses.

It was agreed that the cease-fire will be implemented at 12 o'clock, Iraq time [not further specified]

This is what has now been agreed upon and this was signed by the higher followup committee comprising representatives from the two sides, and the Kurdistan Front under the supervision of Dr. Ahmad al-Jalabi.

[Sabbagh] Mr. Sami, you have heard the seven-point proposals. What is the stand of the KDP on this?

['Abd-al-Rahman] Reception is not that good. How do you receive me?

[Sabbagh] Loud and clear.

['Abd-al-Rahman] Okay. [preceding word in English]. First, the proposals are submitted by Dr. Ahmad, who is an objective and an unbiased person. He has great interest in stopping the fighting and in restoring security and stability to Kurdistan. In the past, many cease-fire agreements were reached but the PUK leaders, regrettably, did not abide by them. At the time, they made some demands such as the removal of some of our forces from the Irbil entrances. Mr. Mas'ud Barzani removed these forces at their request. But, they then occupied these areas and the other roads that lead to Irbil. The truth is that we hope that they will abide by the cease-fire agreement and the provisions mentioned in Dr. al-Jalabi's plan. It remains for me to say that what is important is the implementation.

[Sabbagh] Mr. Sami, then you agree to these seven points?

['Abd-al-Rahman] Agree to what?

[Sabbagh] To the seven points that Dr. Fu'ad Ma'sum has specified?

['Abd-al-Rahman] We accept the plan as an integrated and indivisible whole on condition that the other side abides and implements it. We will implement what applies to us. [passage omitted]

Saddam Chairs, Addresses Cabinet Session

JN1001113495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0940 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 10 Jan (INA)—His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn has said: The Constitution or law is the son and leader of life because when it is passed it is given birth by life and after it becomes an effective law it becomes its leader. Sometimes, this applies to some administrative structures and organizations. However, this quality which we have attributed to the law could be weakened if there emerged new circumstances and conditions that render the law unable to meet life's requirements. Therefore, it is necessary for us to examine this situation from time to time. We also have to caution against the state's intervention in and monopoly of some subsidiary activities and we should seek to encourage competition among the state's departments and organizations as is the case in the private sector.

His excellency said: We used to say in the past that the existence of cadres in various administrative organizations is not in our interest. But, are not the cadres created and developed by the diversity of tasks?. We live in a state that has gained experience and accumulated rich experiments. So, why do we fear pluralism and diversity at a time when we show interest in pluralism in politics? Why should there be no pluralism in this field?

His excellency added: Monopoly in our state is generally unacceptable. Our approach is to take care of qualified people whether in state departments, the socialist sector, or in the private sector. For all these sectors are a national wealth, which we are eager to develop. We must take care to have two generations even inside the one ministry and the departments and facilities affiliated with it. This will give the younger generation the chance to benefit from the experience of the first generation in a natural manner.

His excellency said: The scope of our revolution's thought is wider than the movement of our state. Colonialism knows this fact, thus it exerts strenuous efforts to obstruct our relations with Arab intellectuals in order to prevent the socialist pan-Arab thought and its principles from becoming clearer and more profound. For a very long time, these principles—which are inspired by our heritage—have guided us to realize that there is a conflict on the globe between profusion and the basic requirements of life needed by the deprived. This conflict embodies the principle of social justice, which is a vivid and deep-rooted principle in the history of our nation—the nation of prophets and messengers. To be more specific, there is a vivid and inseparable interaction between social justice and the Islamic doctrine.

His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn made these remarks when he chaired the second session of the Council of Ministers yesterday. In its second session of 1995, which lasted for more than eight hours, the council discussed the issues listed on its agenda, including improving the performance of the State Commission for the Examination and Approval of Crop Seeds, the Ministry of Irrigation's projects, a report on developing the Iraqi Scientific Academy. The Council adopted the appropriate decisions regarding these issues.

Resistance Forces Conduct Operation in Marshlands

NC0801170495 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The popular resistance men carried out a heroic operation against the forces of Saddam Husayn in the marshes of al-'Amarah inflicting huge losses. The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] issued a statement today in which it affirmed that the popular resistance forces succeeded in attacking a military convoy of Saddam's forces which was approaching the villages of al-'Amarah marshes. They managed to destroy some of the vehicles and prevent its advance. The SAIRI statement said the regime's forces lost control of the situation and panicked after some of the members of the convoy were injured. It is well-known that Saddam's regime is carrying out an extermination and killing campaign against the residents of the marshlands under the pretext that they cooperate with the Iraqi resistance forces.

Joint Jordanian-Iraqi Industrial Council Formed

JN0901104895 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 9 Jan 95 p 23

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, AL-RA'Y—Within the framework of efforts to bolster Jordanian-Iraqi economic ties, a Joint Jordanian-Iraqi Industrial Council has been formed headed by Khaldun Abu-Hassan, chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry and Zuhayr Yunis, head of the Iraqi Industries Union.

The Joint Industrial Council, which will hold biannual meetings in Amman and Baghdad, aims to tackle issues that concern industrialists in the two countries and lay down principles for developing relations between Jordanian and Iraqi industrialists.

Abu-Hassan said the formation of the Joint Jordanian-Iraqi Industrial Council emphasized the importance of Jordanian-Iraqi economic relations and the desire to develop them. He said the Chamber of Industry wants to foster economic and industrial relations with all Arab countries in order to realize Arab economic and industrial integration.

He added that the Council will discuss the possibility of setting up joint Jordanian-Iraqi industrial projects that serve the economies of both countries, and establishing an integrated industrial base to enhance economic bonds and the continuation of coordination and cooperation between the private sectors in the two countries. [passage omitted]

Rabin Denies Maps Given to Palestinians

TA1001144295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 10 Jan 95

[Report on news conference by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by unidentified correspondent in Jerusalem, following a tour of the city—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] The news conference has just begun. The first question posed to the prime minister regards events on the northern border. The prime minister will answer right away, and we will then pose a question or two on behalf of Qol Yisra'el.

[Rabin] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] safeguard the security of the settlements and residents along the border with Lebanon and of the villages and residents in the security zone. The IDF carries out activity, primarily against Hizballah elements, which perpetrate most of the terrorist activity—90 percent of it—as well as against organizations belonging to the Palestinian Rejectionist Front, which carry out approximately 10 percent of the terrorist activities against us and the SLA. Our activity is highly diversified. It is mainly defensive, but we will not allow the Hizballah terrorists freedom of action.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, you are live on the air on Qol Yisra'el now, and on behalf of our listeners, I would like to pose two questions to you. First, in the wake of this tour and your declarations about a united Jerusalem, my question is whether you include Greater Jerusalem in this or, rather, what are the borders of Greater Jerusalem? And, at the same time, what is your opinion on the political meetings the Palestinians are conducting in East Jerusalem?

[Rabin] When I speak of a united Jerusalem, I speak in line with the Israeli Government decision of July 1967 and the Jerusalem Law, adopted by the Knesset in 1981 or 1982, if I am not mistaken. That decision and that law determined the municipal borders of united Jerusalem. I act in accordance with the law, and this is my meaning. The other issues, which concern the periphery of united Jerusalem, are another matter. I was referring to what has been defined as united Jerusalem by all Israeli Governments to date.

As for the second matter you raised, we recently passed Knesset legislation, similar to the U.S. law, which ensures that non-Israeli bodies cannot operate without permission on sovereign Israeli territory or on territory subject to Israeli law and jurisdiction. This applies to each and every PLO and Palestinian Authority institution.

[Correspondent] Another question, with your permission: There was talk today of maps being handed over as part of the Israeli- Palestinian accord. What are the first three towns from which the army will withdraw, and how will this stage of continuing the implementation of the peace process look?

[Rabin] No maps have been handed over because no maps have been approved by me. Therefore, this report is completely untrue, and there is no decision, neither regarding the spheres.... [pauses] I would say, in general, that what will guide us in the current and future negotiations with the Palestinians regarding the next stage is the implementation of the principles included in the Declaration of Principles [DOP], which include our responsibility for external security; the practical application of this—namely, along the Jordan River, in the Jordan Valley, throughout this entire region; the security problems related to the settlements, the settlement blocs, and the traffic axes; and all other issues that derive from the DOP with regard to our responsibility for the security of Israelis, both in the settlements and in their movement inside the territories and between the territories and Israel.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 10 January carries a report by Tali Katzenelson, adding that during his tour of Jerusalem today, "Rabin said that, from his point of view, there is no alternative to returning parts of Judaea and Samaria" in order to prevent the collapse of the political process. "He said: There is no choice; Psagot, which is close to al-Birah, constitutes a problem." In a recorded passage, however, Rabin adds: "I have never supported and will never support a withdrawal to the 1967 lines. I want the Jordan River to be the State of Israel's defense border. We must defend Jerusalem and Tel Aviv there and not in Ari'el and 'Anatot."]

Ministry Denies Knowledge of PA-German Meeting

TA1001070295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Foreign Ministry denies it knew in advance of a meeting between members of the Palestinian Authority [PA] and a delegation from the Berlin municipality in East Jerusalem yesterday. The German visitors said they had informed Israel in advance of the meeting, but the Foreign Ministry says this was not the case.

In response to yesterday's meeting, Police Minister Moshe Shahal said PA officials may hold political meetings in East Jerusalem if it is with the prior knowledge of the Israeli Government. However, Shahal added the police would prevent any meeting aimed at establishing governmental control over East Jerusalem.

Sne Denies Labor-PLO Coordination in 1992 Elections

TA0701192595 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Jan 95

[Interview with Health Minister Efrayim Sne by Eli Nisan in the television studio; date not given—recorded, in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; translated from the Hebrew]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nisan] Mr. Health Minister, what is your attitude to the remarks published about you in Abu-Mazin's [Mahmud 'Abbas] book?

[Sne] There is no truth to them except for one fact: I met with Sa'id Kan'an of Nabulus once, in a coffee house. Everything else is a total lie: There was no coordination with the PLO, there were no requests made of it, there were no 20 meetings, and Rabin did not attend any meeting. Everything written there is a lie, and the Likud, as it does with other lies, is trying to use it politically, in a disgusting manner too.

[Nisan] Mr. Minister, there was a PLO call on the Israeli Arabs to vote en masse in the last elections. Was it not coordinated between Labor and the PLO?

[Sne] If the PLO did this, it did so for its own reasons. A long while before the elections the PLO tried to reconcile Mi'ari [of the defunct Progressive List for Peace party] and Darawshah [of the Arab Democratic Party] for their own reasons. They do not need advice and requests from us as to what to do. They have their own considerations. The story about our requests in this regard are an absolute lie. All stories about protocols and talks are an absolute lie.

[Nisan] Mr. Minister, was there not an appeal by Labor to the PLO, through you, to ask for a freeze on settlements or for not making progress in the Washington talks so as not to give credit to the Likud?

[Sne] Really, Eli, the Palestinians needed my advice to oppose settlements! Does this sound logical to you? Was the pace in Washington determined by any request from anybody, or by the gap of positions, which was unbridgeable?! The person who composed these lies is not intelligent either.

[Nisan] Mr. Minister, how did Abu-Mazin then invent the facts which include documents, precise dates, and places?

[Sne] Ask him that please. A lie, when it is made up of numerous details, gives a good impression, but remains a lie nevertheless. The only fact—this morning I checked my diary and found and remembered this: I had a meeting with Sa'id Kan'an on 3 April, at 1 pm, at the Daniyel Tower. That was a routine political conversation. Everything else is a lie which was blown out of all proportion. It was published in London in October, and somebody, for his own reasons, put it out for reuse today.

[Nisan] Mr. Minister, Netanyahu, the Likud leader whom we interviewed, claims that efforts were made between you and the PLO in the course of the day in order to cover up the facts, that you in fact asked the PLO to explain what took place.

[Sne] This man does not stop lying; this too is a lie, but we should learn to live with him as the local liar. There was no pressure exerted today. These are all stories, but people like him have no restraints apparently, and we will need to cope with them.

[Nisan] Were there attempts to hurt Labor possibly as a result of these reports?

[Sne] The entire use of this lie, the recycled use of this old lie, is aimed at hurting Labor, but they started this with the TIME poll last week, and they are continuing now. The truth comes out finally, and they are left with the stink.

[Nisan] Thank you very much.

Rabin, Perry on Iranian Threat, Technology Transfer

TA0901194595

[FBIS Editorial Report] Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1800 on 9 January carries a 2-minute report on a joint news conference by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Jerusalem on 9 January.

In a recorded passage, Secretary Perry says in English: "We are both very much concerned about the threat, the potential future threat, from Iran. We are specifically concerned that Iran may develop unconventional weapons, including the possibility of developing nuclear weapons. I think we have a common view and a common concern on that. We discussed in some detail specific estimates of what it may take, what Iran was doing, and what it might take for them to get a nuclear weapon capability."

A brief recording of Prime Minister Rabin follows, in which he declares: "We support President Clinton's policy of dual containment [last two words in English]. We heard about what the United States is trying to do, its actions among the states that are closer to it, and with two states—Russia and China—that are the potential major suppliers, both directly and indirectly, of more advanced weapons of mass destruction."

Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT, in its 1-minute report on the news conference, quotes Prime Minister Rabin as saying that "without foreign aid, Iran will reach nuclear capability within seven to 15 years." In a recorded passage, Rabin says in English: "...the medium term, longer term, related to its military capability, conventional and nonconventional, which I do not see them immediately. I do not want to define in terms of years, but seven to 15 years."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT also carries a 1- minute report which adds: "Prime Minister Rabin and Secretary Perry told a news conference that Iran could develop an atomic bomb within seven to 15 years. Secretary Perry, however, believes that Iran will be able to cut down the development time if it obtains plutonium or enriched uranium from another state.

"In reply to a question, Perry said that Israel and the United States have established a joint committee to investigate charges that Israel transferred U.S. technology to China. He said he believes that Israel will hold a thorough investigation into the matter. Prime Minister Rabin said in that connection that Israel is not stupid enough to endanger the aid it receives from the United States."

TV Reports Russia-Iran Deal on Nuclear Training

TA0901195395 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have learned that some 500 Iranian experts will be trained in Russia in the nuclear field. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari reports that is one of the clauses in a contract to complete the construction of the nuclear power reactor at Bushehr. The contract is worth is $800 million. Israeli experts told our correspondent that they are more concerned about the boost this will give Iran's nuclear effort than the supply of enriched uranium to produce electricity. Russia's Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhaylov and Reza Amrollah, the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Commission, signed the contract. Amrollah said the contract deals only with civilian use. [passage omitted]

Concern Noted Over Iran's Chemical Warfare Agents

TA0401095195 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 4 Jan 95 p 13

[Report by Arye Egozi]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Iran has been developing its ability to produce chemical warfare agents and has been stockpiling large quantities of them," knowledgeable Israeli sources say.

This Iranian endeavor, combined with its effort to attain the ability to launch long-range surface-to-surface missiles, poses a serious threat to Israel, the knowledgeable sources add.

According to them, Iran has been developing chemical warfare agents since 1984. Initially it produced "World War II-vintage" materials, such as mustard gas, but in recent years it has engaged in a larger and more concentrated effort to develop far more dangerous agents.

The Israeli sources say the Iranians have been purchasing huge amounts of equipment and raw material for the manufacture of the chemical warfare agents.

Iran has also been engaged in a special project aimed at developing and manufacturing biological warfare agents. Firms that purportedly manufacture civilian products, such as medicines, are used as a cover for this activity.

The effort to attain the ability to produce chemical and biological warfare agents and to launch long-range ballistic missiles has aroused great concern in Israel. The Iranians have been operating on two levels: financing the North Korean effort to complete the development of the "Nodong" missile, which has a range of 1,000 km, and developing, with Chinese assistance, a long-range missile that operates on solid propellant.

The Iranians aspire to become self-sufficient in all these areas. It recently transpired that they have also been developing their ability to produce solid propellant for ballistic missiles.

The Iranians have allocated vast amounts of money to the missile development effort, using know-how and equipment sold to them by Russia, East European countries, Pakistan, and Argentina.

Peres on 'Arafat, 'Abbas Book, Cabinet Infighting

TA0901171495 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Rafi Reshef in the studio—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Reshef] We have heard details about the second part of your meeting with Yasir 'Arafat, but there was also a tete-a-tete, in which you discussed redeployment, which it was decided would remain secret. I would like to ask you frankly: Do you think 'Arafat will keep his word to keep it secret?

[Peres] Up to now, he has upheld what we have agreed upon, therefore I think he will. Look, where we find him disappointing is in what he says. In his actions, he more or less keeps to what has been agreed upon.

[Reshef] The Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] affair. You have not said anything about it in the past two or three days since the story broke. I assume that you have been asked for your views.

[Peres] Why should I react? I am not a literary critic.

[Reshef] Is that how you think it is seen by the public or might it cause damage?

[Peres] I do not have to come up with answers to everything the public thinks. I do not provide the nation with amusement. This whole issue is of no interest to me. It is a balloon, which went up, exploded, and is over now. Do I have to react to everything like that? Why should I?

[Reshef] Can you, nevertheless, guess what directed the man to write it and then deny it, or does it not interest you at all?

[Peres] It is really of no interest to me. I have already said it is the first time I have seen somebody write a book without reading it. You need talent to do that. He said that he did not include things in the book that are said to be in it.

[Reshef] You were quoted as telling the cabinet yesterday that the government should not study the ratings on a daily basis; that when David Ben-Gurion made decisions, he was also on his own. Let us say that you scoff at immediate popularity. Perhaps from your personal experience, low polls often do not reflect reality. I suppose, however, that there are government processes, decisionmaking processes, and situations that cause you great concern and pain.

[Peres] I ask myself a much more serious question: Why be elected? In order to be reelected? You are elected in order to carry out a policy, to change things. From my experience, I know that any change arouses opposition, suspicion, skepticism. Nothing can be done about it. You either have to deal with the issues or devote yourself to looking after your popularity. Anybody entering government must have endurance and be capable of dealing with difficult situations, implementing a new policy, and not be frightened off.

[Reshef] But in this case, I think you will agree that there is a correlation between government malfunctioning and public opinion, which is not cut off from difficulties faced by the government.

[Peres] That could be the case. I do not know what the public says. I think we have to complete the peace process, at least in two areas, with the Palestinians and the Jordanians. For me, the term a new Middle East is not an empty phrase and we will make progress on that as well. We have two years in which to do it and we should not be afraid or sigh and weep.

[Reshef] Mr. Peres, is not the handwriting on the wall for this government? Minister Moshe Shahal called for a cabinet reshuffle. [Torah Observing Sephardim leader] Arye Der'i said the prime minister has too much on his mind. Your loyalty to the prime minister is very impressive, but I am sure you have criticisms which you express in more intimate forums.

[Peres] I have much greater ambitions than what you have mentioned. I want to prove that even when the decision goes against us, we take it as we should. I want to introduce a different standard of behavior. The people decided who should govern for four years. I accept that. I said that is how I will act, and that is what I am doing. Nothing will entice me to do otherwise. In other words, what I aspire to is to advance with the peace process without stepping right or left, not to fight over power, but to maintain strength in order to fight over the correct path.

[Reshef] But peace will not help—there the government has fewer problems—when there are internal problems, which could torpedo the efforts you believe in so much.

[Peres] I cannot deal with everything. I am in charge of a certain field, in which there have been tremendous, historic changes.

[Reshef] Is there a place for earthquakes, dramatic changes, in an attempt to improve things?

[Peres] In the government?

[Reshef] Yes.

[Peres] I am not dealing with that, I do not suffer from it, I do not enjoy it. To me the main thing that influences all of life, including economic life, is the peace process. We must not let up. We have to hold on to it with all our might. I want to add something: Excuse me saying so, but I have more experience than you on this. Everything great requires a major struggle. Each major argument requires a great deal of time. It is a fight against time, it is a struggle while facing discord. Those who remain steadfast, lead, and are victorious.

[Reshef] May I ask you a more personal question? Did Mr. Rabin say anything to you about your impressive loyalty?

[Peres] I do not need any compliments, I do it with great conviction.

[Reshef] You said you would honor the decision made for four years. Is there a question mark about what will happen after this government's term?

[Peres] Yes, after four years everything is open.

[Reshef] So you are not saying: I will not compete.

[Peres] Why should Shim'on Peres say what will happen in another two years, which is a very long time. Look what we have done in two years. When I look over these two years, I see an enormous opportunity to go forward. Not to give up, not to make minor efforts. Sometimes the newspaper headlines are longer than the news in them. People are sometimes frightened off by headlines. I am not.

Likud Demands State Probe Into 'Abbas Book

TA0801182195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Likud demands the establishment of a state commission of inquiry that should discover the truth about the contents of Abu-Mazin's [Mahmud 'Abbas] book. A decision in this spirit was made at a Likud Knesset faction's political forum consultation this afternoon.

Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu will convene the leaders of the opposition Knesset factions tomorrow to obtain their support for the inquiry commission demand. Knesset Member Moshe Nisim told our correspondent Eytan Almog that the state commission should also probe Abu-Mazin's allegations concerning contacts between the Likud and the PLO. [passage omitted]

Committee To Examine Freeing Palestinian Prisoners

TA0901113595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 9 Jan 95 p A1

[Report by Aluf Ben and Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The prime minister yesterday appointed a ministerial committee to examine the criteria for the release of additional Palestinian prisoners. During the talks of the liaison committee in Cairo last week, the Israeli delegation promised to examine a request by the Palestinians to free more prisoners because, they claimed, it is a serious problem that prevents them from gaining support for the continuation of the negotiations.

The ministerial committee on Palestinian prisoners is made up of Police Minister Moshe Shahal, Justice Minister David Liba'i, and Minister Sarid. In its first session yesterday, the committee heard reports about prisoners held in Israel and started an initial examination of the criteria for their release, which will be continued in the coming days. The ministers were told that Israel currently holds 5,500 Palestinian prisoners, of which 2,600 were arrested after the signing of the Oslo agreement and that under 1,000 are convicted murderers.

The ministerial committee is examining the option of initially releasing some 500 prisoners convicted of misdemeanors, based on a list it will receive from the security services. The ministers decided they will not approve the release of prisoners belonging to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or the Islamic Jihad who were jailed for crimes committed after the signing of the Oslo agreement.

Nabil Sha'th said yesterday that he and his colleagues at the Palestinian Authority [PA] are encouraged by Israel's decision to establish the ministerial committee. He said last night that Israel is holding Palestinian prisoners as "political bargaining chips" with which to force the Palestinians into making further concessions in other areas.

A senior PA official said last night that he expects the imminent release of a large group of prisoners in response to a request to that effect which the PA filed with Israel. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 9 January adds: "Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq, a leading Fatah activist in Gaza, has welcomed the establishment by Israel of a ministerial committee to examine the release of Palestinian prisoners. At the same time, 'Abd-al-Raziq said that the Palestinians will not accept an Israeli veto against the release of prisoners that Israel says have blood on their hands."]

Rabin Says Labor Must Overcome 'Internal Anarchy'

TA0501170695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 5 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says next week the government will have to make tough decisions on matters concerning the Labor Party's faction in the Knesset. No one was elected individually, Rabin said. All members of the faction were elected on a list, and decisions apply to everyone. This morning, Rabin canceled a meeting of the Labor caucus to discuss the economic arrangements bill and the crisis over a long school day, caused by the stand of coalition chairman Eli Dayan.

A public opinion poll quoted by TIME magazine indicates a major loss of support for Prime Minister Rabin and the Labor Party. However, Prime Minister Rabin and the party secretary, Nisim Zvili, reject the finding. David Essing reports:

[Begin Essing recording] [passage omitted] Prime Minister Rabin blasted the TIME report, saying the Labor Party had not taken any such poll. Rabin called it a deliberate attempt to paint a distorted picture. The prime minister went on to say that, two days ago, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spread a fallacious rumor about a kidnapped soldier, using the same methods. In Rabin's view, the problem was not Likud but inside Labor itself. He announced that both the government and the Labor Knesset caucus would have to take some tough decisions next week and, he added, no one was elected on his own. We were elected as a party list, and we are all obligated by decisions.

The prime minister has canceled a Labor caucus meeting that was to discuss the crisis created by coalition chairman Eli Dayan over the education budget. At the same time, Rabin warned, the writing was on the wall, and the threat would come to pass if Labor did not overcome its internal anarchy.

Labor Party Secretary Nisim Zvili also categorically denies the poll quoted by TIME. A survey taken by Labor five weeks ago had shown totally different results, and he did not believe that Labor had suffered such a setback in just over a month. Zvili added that Labor would consider suing TIME for libel, but Zvili admitted there has been a swing to the right, and Labor must takes a series of steps to counter the public sense of insecurity.

Meanwhile, Police Minister Moshe Shahal also calls on Prime Minister Rabin to initiate measures to shore up the party and the government's image. Shahal announced that his hat will be in the ring for the premiership, after Yitzhaq Rabin retires. [end recording]

More on Rabin Remarks

TA0601085095 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Jan 95 p 1

[Report by Sarah Honig]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] "A change is needed, first in the functioning of the party, and the Knesset faction, but also in the government, to assure that we fulfill our promises to the public in the realms of peace, security, and changing national priorities," Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said last night.

Speaking in Nazareth, Rabin was responding to a day of tension and fireworks in the Labor Party, following a report by TIME magazine of a poll that Rabin insisted was never taken, which showed the Labor Party would be soundly defeated if national elections were held now. [passage omitted]

"I take responsibility for everything," Rabin said on Israel Television. "I take responsibility for the success of the Labor Party that took over the government after 15 years of opposition, and I take responsibility for the faults of today."

Labor denied it had conducted any opinion surveys recently; for a few hours the party even intimated it would sue TIME for libel. TIME stuck by its story, noting it originated from several Labor sources.

THE JERUSALEM POST was told by one Labor source there had been a poll which showed Rabin losing not by a 10 percent margin, but by 7 to 8 percent. Veteran pollster Dr. Mina Tzemah said yesterday that an independent poll she conducted last week bolsters the TIME report. Tzemah's poll also shows Netanyahu beating Rabin by 10 percent, considerably above any margin of error.

The TIME story, by Jerusalem bureau chief Lisa Beyer, will be published in its next issue, but has already been circulated to subscribers of its America On-line electronic mail service. [passage omitted]

Rabin conceded, however, that, "Support for Labor is on the decline. It would not be right to depict Labor and its Knesset faction as being in top working order.

"Our problem is not with the Likud, but with us inside Labor," he said. "The writing is on the wall."

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 6 January, in a related report, adds: "Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin does not currently intend to carry out a cabinet reshuffle but merely to restore order in the Labor party's Knesset faction. This, according to cabinet ministers who spoke yesterday with the prime minister. The ministers told our correspondent Yo'el Nir that the intention was to pass the Economic Arrangements Law in the Knesset next week, without the reservations voiced by Knesset Member [MK] Eli Dayan regarding a long school day. The prime minister and finance minister yesterday rejected compromise proposals by MK's on this issue.

["The Labor faction will meet on Monday [9 January] afternoon at the prime minister's bureau."]

Rabin Said Considering Baraq for Defense Minister

TA0601190195 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 6 Jan 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rabin is considering appointing Former Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq as defense minister as part of an effort to improve the government's image. Rabin will meet with Baraq early next week.

Our correspondents 'Imanu'el Rosen and Yaron Deqel report that Baraq is interested in the post of defense minister or a different ministerial portfolio. He will not, however, make do with being an adviser or the negotiator with the Syrians. Baraq himself still refuses to discuss his future.

Labor also claims that the prime minister intends to replace Knesset Member Eli Dayan, the coalition chairman, if he sticks to his reservations concerning a long school day in the economic arrangements law.

Baraq Denies Report on Appointment

TA0601200795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Former Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq has categorically denied reports published this evening that he is about to be appointed the defense minister. Baraq told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that the reports were totally unfounded.

Muslim Brotherhood Figure on New Cabinet, Peace

NC0901193395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1755 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Telephone interview with 'Abd-al-Majid al-Dhunaybat, general "observer" of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, by 'Isam Hasan; place and date not given—-recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Being the general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Jordan, how do you view...?

[Al-Dhunaybat, interrupting] Excuse me, you mean observer.

[Hasan] As the general observer of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, how do you view and evaluate the new formation of the Jordanian cabinet, and how do you compare it to the old one?

[Al-Dhunaybat] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. As a group, I would like to point out that we were not approached with a proposition to participate in this cabinet. Had we been approached, we would have presented our view on the cabinet program and the ministers in charge of that program. As an organization, we think that this is not the proper time for participation at this stage. A meeting was held with His Excellency Prime Minister Zayd Bin-Shakir and a dialogue was held concerning challenges at the domestic and foreign levels. The group was careful to register its viewpoint on domestic and outside challenges. This viewpoint is based on the principles of our religion, our established policy, and our eagerness to protect the future of our homeland and nation.

A positive, satisfactory, and reassuring spirit governed these talks [with the prime minister]. The cabinet was formed last night. We do not judge the program of any government by its ministerial statement. All statements are usually beautiful when they are phrased, written, or heard. We are waiting for what comes next; that is, the government performance. Our judgment will be based on that performance. I believe that it is premature to assess the experience. Anyway, the new ministers are not much different in their principles and inclinations from those who preceded them, although there are new faces. We hope they will serve the interest of the homeland and the citizens.

[Hasan] Do I understand from your words that you do not assume a negative position on the government statement?

[Al-Dhunaybat] As I said, we considerably agree with the government on certain things. These include the economic problem and their solutions, such as unemployment and attracting capital and investments. This concerns us all. The second thing is opening the door to democracy, freedom of expression, and tolerating counterviews. The government has promised to do that. The third thing is focusing on national unity and popular cohesion vis-a-vis internal and external challenges.

The third thing [as heard] we demand is to preclude normalization with Jews as a provision after the agreement was signed. We have our viewpoint on this matter, which is based on our principles and the public interest. I do not think the government will stop implementing the provisions of the agreement. Although we hope and are eager to annul the peace agreement and its provisions, which pose a threat to the nation's identity, creed, future, and economic state. We believe that Jordan is the rock that stands in the way of the Zionist challenge and scheme that threatens not Jordan alone but the entire Islamic world.

I believe that you in Iran as well are involved in the risk the Zionists pose to the Islamic nation. We heard of the Jewish threat concerning the rising peaceful nuclear power in Iran. We believe that we in Jordan constitute the spearhead of the Islamic world and movements against Jews' schemes. Jordan stands on the frontline in the face of that Zionist scheme.

We believe that we are all requested to stand up to that scheme as Islamic movements, peoples, regimes, and states.

Greece's Papandreou Arrives for Short Visit

Received by al-Majali

JN0601151495 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Accepting an invitation from Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the Greek Prime Minister and Mrs. Papandreou arrived in Amman from Damascus this afternoon for a short visit to the Kingdom. Accompanied by a delegation of ministers, the Greek prime minister was accorded an official reception led by Dr. al-Majali.

In an arrival statement at Amman Airport, Mr. Papandreou said he looked forward to a meeting with His Majesty King Husayn to discuss ties between the two friendly countries and issues of shared interest. Mr. Papandreou said he admired the Jordanian leadership and people. He said he will hold talks with the prime minister and other Jordanian officials on economic relations and cultural exchanges. Mr. Papandreou described Greek-Jordanian relations as good.

On hand to welcome him at the airport were a number of cabinet ministers, top civil and military officers, members of the diplomatic corps, and the staff of the Greek Embassy.

Foreign Ministers Hold Talks

JN0701180995 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1615 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 7 Jan (PETRA)—A round of bilateral talks was held at the Foreign Ministry this morning between the Jordanian side, led by Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of foreign affairs, and the Greek side led by Karolos Papoulias, minister of foreign affairs.

The two sides discussed bilateral relations. Al-Hasan reviewed means of developing these relations and explained several regional and international issues, foremost of which was the Jordanian- Israeli peace treaty. He pointed out the role Greece played in supporting this treaty, and its role within the European Union toward the treaty, and spoke about the close relations between His Majesty King Husayn and the leaders and heads of state of the European Union members.

Al-Hasan also reviewed the peace process in the Middle East and Jordan's central role in establishing just and lasting peace in the region in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the principle of a comprehensive solution.

He said the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty had positive results, and said this treaty is a balanced one since it enhanced the chances of peace in the region after the clear faltering on the other tracks. He said Jordan restored its sovereignty over its occupied territories and its full rights to water from Jordan and al-Yarmuk Rivers.

For his part, the Greek foreign minister said Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou's visit to Jordan is his second visit, and this is a clear signal to the importance Greece pins on Jordan, and spoke about the depth of bilateral relations in various fields. He said there are wide horizons and chances for cooperation in the tourist and trade fields, and for the possibilities of setting up joint companies and for cooperation in the field of manpower. He said Greece is ready to activate the role of the Joint Jordanian- Greek Ministerial Committee in order to activate bilateral economic relations.

He said Greece intends to open a cultural center in Amman to bolster cultural and scientific relations through this center.

The Greek foreign minister said his country is prepared to increase the number of scholarships and to exchange visits by students and university professors between the two countries.

He said Greece will actively participate in the Amman economic conference due to be held early next summer, and stressed that Greece supports the Jordanian positions and political and economic trends at the European Union. He said that views on bilateral, regional, and international issues were identical.

The talks were attended from the Jordanian side by Nayif al- Hadid, secretary general of the Foreign Ministry, and a number of directors of departments at the ministry, the secretary general of the Greek Foreign Ministry, and a number of ranking ministry officials.

Papoulias described his talks at the Foreign Ministry as very positive and fruitful, and said the Jordanian and Greek views on these issues are identical.

He hailed the distinguished efforts made by Jordan under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn on the regional and international levels and lauded the good relations between Jordan and Greece.

King Husayn Meets With Papandreou

JN0701203695 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 7 Jan 95

[From the "New at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] His majesty the king visited Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou at al-Hashimiyah Palace. The two leaders reviewed bilateral ties and means to boost them in all fields, particularly in the cultural and economic spheres.

His Majesty described the nature of developments in the region, and Jordan's efforts to achieve a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace for all those concerned parties.

Mr. Papandreou hailed his majesty's leadership and his efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region.

Last night the Greek prime minister congratulated Jordan for signing the peace treaty with Israel during a dinner hosted by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali.

The Greek premier said Athens was keen to participate in solving two basic problems; security for all parties in the Middle East, and to guarantee economic development to achieve tangible results for the people of the region.

Prime Minister al-Majali said Jordan always looks to the support of Greece and the European Union, and seeks joint endeavors to boost our mutual relations.

Greece described Mr. Papandreou's visit to Jordan as important for both countries. It also denied rumors that the Greek premier was having health problems. [passage omitted]

Official Talks Held

JN0801173695 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian side, led by outgoing Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, and the Greek side, led by Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou held an official round of talks at the Prime Ministry this afternoon. More details in the following report:

During the talks, the two sides reviewed ties between the two friendly countries and ways of enhancing and promoting them in the economic, cultural, touristic, health, and social fields. The two sides also discussed several regional and international issues of common concern, primarily the developments in the Middle East peace process and the role of Jordan and Greece in promoting peace and security in the region. They also discussed ways to enhance relations of economic cooperation among Middle East countries.

The prime minister welcomed the visit of Papandreou and his delegation to Jordan, which comes at a very important stage in the history of the region. He expressed hope that the visit will contribute to consolidating ties of friendship between the two countries, which His Majesty King Husayn and the Greek president have been very eager to promote in all fields.

The prime minister added that this visit is an opportunity for the Greek guests to familiarize themselves with the great development process in Jordan in all fields in spite of the challenges and great burdens over the past five decades. The prime minister also reiterated Jordan's appreciation of Greece's efforts through the European Union [EU] and its contribution to the peace process. He praised the EU's understanding of Jordan's central role in the region and the circumstances and challenges facing Jordan. He noted the special relations of friendship between Jordan and the EU, especially in the areas of economic cooperation and technical aid.

During the session of talks, the prime minister also stressed Jordan's full adherence to the principles of international law and international legitimacy, represented in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the land-for-peace principle, and a comprehensive solution. He said attaining a just and lasting peace has been at the center of Jordan's foreign policy over the past four decades. This has materialized in Jordan's unceasing efforts and abiding commitment to attain this objective.

Al-Majali further noted the treaty's emphasis on Jordan's historical role in the holy shrines until the brother Palestinians regain their sovereign rights to these shrines.

For his part, Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou paid tribute to His Majesty King Husayn's wise leadership and Jordan's pivotal, key role in enhancing peace, security, and stability in the Middle East. He stressed his country's eagerness to boost and enhance relations of cooperation and friendship between Jordan and Greece in all domains, especially in the economic, trade, tourist, cultural, and social fields. He also stressed the importance of setting up a Greek cultural center in Amman to enhance cultural ties between the two peoples and to activate trade and tourism between the two countries.

A joint statement will be issued tomorrow in Amman and Athens at the conclusion of the official visit of the Greek prime minister and his accompanying delegation on the most important results of the visit and the issues discussed between the two sides.

The talks were attended for the Greek side by the ministers of foreign affairs, health, trade, transport, and social affairs.

Health Reports 'Categorically' Denied

NC0701130695 Athens Elliniki Radhiofonia Radio Network in Greek 1230 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Minister of Press Tilemakhos Khitiris who is accompanying Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou on his trip to Damascus and Amman a short while ago categorically denied reports by foreign news agencies that Papandreou was to enter Amman's Husayn Medical Center for a medical check up. Khitiris said that he categorically denies all these reports and called on the news agencies to correct their reports immediately.

Furthermore, Health Minister Dhimitrios Kremastinos, who is also Papandreou's personal doctor, told the ATHENS NEWS AGENCY that he is being forced to speak out today for the second time after a relevant FINANCIAL TIMES report because, he said, these reports create bad impressions and damage our country. All these reports are unfounded, Kremastinos said. He called for self-restraint and seriousness because national interests are affected, since the overseas picture of the country's responsible government is being hurt.

It should be noted following all this that Prime Minister Papandreou will meet in one hour with the correspondents of the Greek mass media who are accompanying him in his trip.

It should also be noted that AFP reported earlier that the Greek prime minister had entered an Amman Hospital for a scheduled cardiological examination. Furthermore, attributing its report to anonymous sources, the German news agency DPA said that Papandreou will enter a hospital for examinations after complaining of stomach problems.

Official Denies Medical Checks

JN0901192195 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 9 Jan 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dr. Yusuf al-Qusus, director of the Royal Medical Services, Sunday [8 January] denied reports that Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou had undergone medical check-ups at the centre on Saturday, as was reported by international agencies over the weekend. "His excellency the prime minister of Greece has not been subjected to any medical examinations at the King Husayn Medical Centre," Dr. al-Qusus told the JORDAN TIMES.

Papandreou Leaves After 'Successful' Visit

JN0901170995 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou left Amman this afternoon following a four-day visit to the Kingdom. During the visit, Mr. Papandreou met with His Majesty King Husayn and a number of senior Jordanian officials. [passage omitted]

In a predeparture press statement, Mr. Papandreou said his visit was successful. He noted that the peace process is proceeding steadily. He hoped that a just, comprehensive peace for all countries will be achieved, noting that his visit is a step in this direction. He said the visit opened new horizons in bilateral relations, especially in the fields of tourism and culture. He said the Greek Cultural Center which was agreed to be opened in Amman marks the beginning of this cooperation. He indicated that Greece wishes to play a role in developing these areas, especially after the peace process. [passage omitted]

Meeting on 'Displaced' Held With Palestinians

JN0801165495 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1510 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 8 Jan (PETRA)—Jordanian and Palestinian delegates held a session at the Interior Ministry today. The Jordanian side was led by Khalil Khuraysat, Interior Ministry secretary general, while the Palestinian side was led by Ahmad al-Tamimi, under secretary of the Interior Ministry of the Palestinian self-rule authority. Representatives from other Jordanian ministries and official departments also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the conferees reviewed what had been agreed upon in previous meetings on the issue of the displaced who reside in the kingdom. The conferees also discussed what the Palestinian side had agreed upon with the Egyptian side on the same issue.

In addition, the conferees reviewed the information of both sides and the sources of this information. They also discussed the Palestinian side's view of the issue of the displaced, which is mentioned in Article 12 of the Oslo Accord between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, and the mechanism the Palestinians envision for the return of the displaced and the priorities of such a mechanism.

The purpose of the meeting is to come up with a clear idea about and a unified number of the displaced who reside in Jordan. This way, it will be easy to adopt negotiating positions with the parties concerned. This is also a prelude to a trilateral meeting that will be held in Cairo, bringing together Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinians, to precede a quadrilateral meeting in which Israel will take part.

Talks Held With Qatari Foreign Ministry Team

JN0801210095 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 8 Jan 95

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Qatari and Jordanian Foreign Ministry officials held talks in Amman to prepare for the forthcoming meeting of the Jordanian-Qatari joint committee. Qatari Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Ahmad 'Abdallah Al Mahmud and his Jordanian counterpart, Nayif al-Hadid, chaired the session of the talks at Jordan's Foreign Ministry.

The joint committee meeting, due to be held in Doha, will work to activate a number of cooperation agreements in the various fields concluded between the two countries. The Qatari official said his country is keen on deepening ties with Jordan and that the two countries have yet other areas for joint cooperation.

Foreign Minister Meets Qatari Official

JN0901164995 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At his office in the Foreign Ministry today, Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti received Ahmad Bin-'Abdallah Al Mahmud, Qatari Foreign Ministry under secretary. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the existing brotherly bilateral relations. The minister stressed the deep and distinguished relations and the need to promote them to the highest level in order to meet the aspirations of the two countries' leaders and brotherly peoples.

Al-Kabariti said Qatar's policy enjoys high respect and appreciation. He added that Jordan under His Majesty King Husayn is eager to boost those relations in various fields to the highest degree of coordination and coordination in the interest of the two sisterly countries.

For his part, Al Mahmud emphasized Qatar's absolute eagerness to develop and promote the existing brotherly relations between the two countries. He said the best way to promote those relations is to conclude agreements and protocols organizing the various activities between the two countries.

Businessmen Refuse To Sign Protocol With Israel

JN0901103495 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 9 Jan 95 p 17

[FBIS Translated Text] The Economic AL-DUSTUR has learned from well-informed sources that the Union of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce [UJCC] did not agree to holding roundtable meetings between Jordanian and Israeli businessmen in Amman during a visit by an Israeli trade delegation—headed by the president of the Israeli Federation of Chambers of Commerce [IFCC]—to Amman last week. The Israeli delegation proposed to the Jordanian side to organize such a roundtable meeting.

In another development, the UJCC refused to sign a cooperation protocol with the IFCC. The Israeli side had already proposed signing such a protocol with Jordan through previous correspondence.

It is noteworthy that the Jordanian and Israeli Governments are continuing negotiations within the framework of what is stipulated in the peace treaty between the two countries to reach agreements in various fields, including economic fields, so that such agreements could be reached by next May in accordance with the treaty.

The sources indicated that during its meeting with the Israeli delegation, the UJCC focused on a number of priority topics for the Jordanian economy, foremost being the need to lift the economic embargo on Iraq. This is because the Iraqi market is especially importantfor the Jordanian economic sectors. Iraq is a natural andtraditional market for Jordanian products. Moreover, the UJCC emphasized the importance of implementing the accords signed between Jordan and Palestine. It was also emphasized that peace in the region should be comprehensive and lasting, and that peace should be reached as soon as possible with Syria and Lebanon. Without real peace in the region, there is no justification for economic cooperation at the businessmen level.

Hizballah Opposes Joint U.S. Security Committee

NC1001124695 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 30 Dec 94 p 4

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Yesterday Hizballah issued a statement on the formation of the Lebanese-U.S. Security Committee. The statement says in part: We have stated in the past and we reiterate it now that the U.S. embargo against Lebanon is a political stance aimed at putting pressure on it to make concessions in the bilateral and multilateral talks with the enemy, mainly in regard to the resistance and its weapons. We believe that the talk about a security committee to discuss security arrangements in and around the airport is only a cover for imposing more U.S. conditions relating to purely internal affairs.

The statement adds: This being the case, it is meaningless for Washington to impose certain security requirements on the Lebanese side since it has been absolutely proven that security and stability in Lebanon has made such great strides that the security situation here is now much, much better than in the United States and other Western countries.

The Americans' talk about security concerns and fears for the lives of their citizens is discredited by the fact that Lebanon has restored its vitality and now receives thousands of tourists and businessmen of various nationalities without any indication or even possibility of any worrying situation cropping up.

While we are confident in and proud of the strong and stable situation, we affirm that if the U.S. demands are met, they will represent a violation of Lebanese sovereignty and will damage the government's credibility. There will also be an attempt to impose some kind of political and security custodianship, which is unacceptable regardless of the circumstances and conditions.

Finally, we affirm that the formation of the security committee, which is slated to travel to Washington at the start of the new year, will open the door to an internal controversy that will help increase suspicions—something which is incompatible with the need to consolidate our political stance in the face of the Zionist attacks and the attempts to impose impossible conditions.

Sfayr Blast Caused by Bomb Placed Behind Office

NC1001084495 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 2 Jan 95 pp 10-11

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Army command has published adequate information about the [21 December] explosion in the Sfayr quarter that killed three people, one of them (former) Hizballah official Fu'ad Mughaniyah, and wounded many others. [passage omitted]

According to as yet unpublished information on the crime, fugitive criminal Ahmad al-Hallaq made use of an old relationship with Fu'ad Mughaniyah to commit his crime. The relationship dated back to the time when they were members of an armed Palestinian group before Mughaniyah joined Hizballah at the start of the eighties and al-Hallaq joined one of the groups of the Fatah movement.

Contacts between the two men continued over the ensuing years and despite the circumstances affecting both men. Fu'ad Mughaniyah continued to regard al-Hallaq as an "old acquaintance," especially when he concentrated on business activity.

The main lead pointing to al-Hallaq resulted from his insistence on ascertaining that Fu'ad Mughaniyah was in his office inside his shop before committing his crime in accordance with the instructions given to him.

Five minutes before the explosion al-Hallaq entered the shop after a bag of explosives was placed beside a wall directly behind Mughaniyah's office. He entered the shop, shook hands with Mughaniyah, and even kissed him on his forehead, telling him: "Hajj, I will be back in five minutes."

Al-Hallaq left and, before entering his car, pressed the remote- controlled detonating device. One of the people in the shop asked Mughaniyah about the man who had entered the shop and kissed him on his forehead and Mughaniyah answered: "He is Ahmad al-Hallaq." As soon as he said the name the explosion occurred and Fu'ad Mughaniyah and others were killed.

The first thing the witness remembered after recovering from the shock of the explosion and the horror of the incident was the name Ahmad al-Hallaq. He informed the security services and they went to al-Hallaq's house to investigate. The patrol sent to al-Hallaq's house found al-Hallaq's wife preparing her luggage to travel to Cyprus. (She intended to travel on 23 December.) The patrol also noted that when she was asked about her husband's whereabouts, she gave an answer that was "not normal." She was taken in for questioning and confessed to committing the crime with her husband and other members of their network.

Following the crime, al-Hallaq went to a restaurant in al-Rawshah [in Beirut] and then to his house in the city. He then left for his hometown of Barja, spent the night there, and left in the morning for the border strip. He then disappeared.

'Several Terrorist Attacks' Reported on SLA Posts

SLA Radio Says Attacks 'Repulsed'

NC1001083295 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0800 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night the South Lebanese Army [SLA] repulsed several terrorist attacks against SLA posts in Jazzin, Kafr Hunah, and 'Arab Salim.

The terrorists used rockets and machine guns to attack the Tumat Jazzin post. The attack was covered by heavy artillery and rocket bombardment from terrorist positions in 'Ayn al-Tinah and Mashgharah. Soon after the bombardment the terrorists carried out several unsuccessful attacks against the Kurum al-Arz and Jazzin posts, using Sagger missiles and machine guns. They also shelled residential areas in Jazzin from their positions in Mashgharah and 'Ayn Bu Siwar.

Other terrorist groups tried to attack the Kafr Hunah and 'Arab Salim posts. The SLA foiled all the attacks. Two SLA soldiers were slightly wounded and were treated on the spot.

Our military correspondent reports that Israeli and SLA artillery helped to repulse the attacks and shelled the terrorist artillery positions.

As usual the terrorists shelled the periphery of Marj 'Uyun but there were no casualties.

'Resistance' Attack Detailed

NC1001063095 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The situation in the south last night was no better than it had been during the day. Military operations continued, involving areas that were targets of attack the first time. The resistance attacked the command post of Regiment 20 in the Jazzin Barracks and the surrounding areas.

Hizballah distributed a statement during the night declaring that the Islamic Resistance had launched a broad-front attack against several Israeli positions in the western al-Biqa' and the south shortly before midnight last night.

The statement says that the Islamic Resistance attacked the Lahd Forces' [South Lebanese Army, SLA] Jazzin Barracks, the Jazzin crossing point, the Kurum al-Arz position, the Jazzin Operations Center, and the Artillery Regiment command post. Also attacked were the Kafr Huna and Taw'amat Niha positions in western al-Biqa', Bi'r Kallab, al-Suwayda', and al-Tuhrah.

Hizballah's statement adds that these attacks were supported by a bombardment of the Marj 'Uyun Barracks.

The statement says that the resistance thwarted an Israeli advance on Shaqra in a fierce battle.

This is the first time that the resistance has attacked the Regiment 20 Command at the Jazzin Barracks and its environs.

During the daylight hours yesterday, the south was the scene of fierce artillery bombardment and military operations that extended from al-Hinniyah south of Tyre to Haris on the periphery of the border zone. During these operations several shells fell inside Israeli territory.

A Lahd [SLA] soldier was killed and an Israeli soldier was wounded during the clashes.

A Lebanese mother and her child were injured by the Israeli shelling of southern townships and villages.

Kuwaiti Ministers Arrive for Committee Meetings

JN0901182595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Nasir 'Abdallah al-Rawdan, Kuwaiti second deputy prime minister and finance minister, and Hilal Mishari al-Mutayri, Kuwaiti commerce and industry minister, arrived in Damascus this afternoon on a two-day visit to Syria to attend the meetings of the Joint Syrian-Kuwaiti Committee. [passage omitted]

Al-Rawdan said many issues in transportation, investment, and economic and trade cooperation will be discussed during the joint committee meetings. Foremost among the topics is a land transportation agreement between the two countries, as well as establishing a holding company in Syria after procedures to set it up have been finalized.

Regarding future projects of the Kuwaiti Fund for Industrial Development in Syria, he said all projects under discussion between the Fund and the Syrian Government are proceeding without delay. He added: We have contributed to many vital projects in Syria. The mission of the Kuwaiti Fund for Economic Development continues to exist in Damascus in order to discuss further projects. In addition to sewage disposal, telephone, and power station projects, there is a cement project that vwe will agree on, he noted.

Al-Rawdan indicated both sides will discuss increasing trade exchanges by organizing exhibitions and trade centers in both countries.

Committee Meetings Begin

JN0901210495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At 1900 today, the meetings of the Joint Syrian-Kuwaiti Committee began at the Prime Ministry under the cochairmanship of Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and Nasir 'Abdallah al-Rawdan, Kuwaiti second deputy prime minister and minister of finance. [passage omitted]

At the outset of the talks, Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and Nasir 'Abdallah al-Rawdan, Kuwaiti second deputy prime minister and finance minister, exchanged cordial speeches on the occasion, commending the profound fraternal ties existing between the two countries. They also called for promoting and enhancing these ties in all areas.

For his part, al-Rawdan thanked Syria and its leader His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad for its principled positions toward Kuwait and Arab causes.

During this meeting, the two sides reviewed what has been implemented of the decisions made during the previous session of the joint committee. They also discussed the draft resolutions adopted at the preparatory meetings with regard to bilateral cooperation in the economic and touristic areas and joint projects. Afterward, both sides agreed to form joint working committees to discuss various aspects of Syrian-Kuwaiti cooperation during the meetings of this session.

Deputy Prime Minister Meets Kuwaitis

JN0901200295 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1830 today, Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, received Nasir 'Abdallah al-Rawdan, Kuwaiti second deputy prime minister and finance minister. The meeting was attended by Dr. Muhammad Khalid al-Mahayini, minister of finance; Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Subay'i, minister of state for planning affairs; and the Syrian ambassador to Kuwait. The meeting was attended on the Kuwaiti side by Commerce and Industry Minister Hilal Mishari al-Mutayri and Kuwaiti Ambassador in Damascus Ibrahim al-Musa.

Talks during the meeting dealt with bilateral relations and the agenda of the Joint Syrian-Kuwaiti Committee.

Speaker Meets Syrian-Lebanese Council Official

JN0901151795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning, People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah received Nasri al-Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council. Talks during the meeting dealt with the council's work and the importance of bilateral meetings between both fraternal countries in the service of common interests in all fields, as well as the need to consolidate bilateral relations, particularly parliamentary ties.

Al-Shar' Receives Lebanon's Junblatt

JN0901181795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this afternoon received Walid Junblatt, Lebanese minister of refugee affairs and leader of the Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party.

Talks during the meeting dealt with the regional situation, developments in the peace process, and the fraternal relations between the two sisterly countries, Syria and Lebanon.

*Minister on Satellite Channel Company, Illegal Dishes

95AA0030A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 30 Oct 94 pp 66-67

[Interview with Information Minister Muhammad Salman, by Hiyam Munawwar, in Damascus; date not given—first six paragraphs are AL-MAJJALLAH introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Satellite dishes have become widespread and very obvious in Syria. They are found in different sizes, are seen on top of houses and buildings, and receive haphazardly tens of channels.

It is however surprising that one of the workers involved in fixing these dishes asserted that they are much more widespread in low- and middle-income districts such as al-Yarmuk Camp than in affluent districts such as Abu-Rummanah, al-Maliki, and al-Mazzah. In fact, members of some of these low- and middle-income families resort to selling either a piece of furniture from their homes or a piece of the wife's jewelry in order to buy this magical appliance (the miracles box). This appliance makes it possible for one to see the world as a small and accessible one. Though this appliance provides enjoyable recreation and useful cultural knowledge, some of the movies that it offers contain exciting scenes that are alien to our society, its principles, and its values. These negative aspects of the satellite dishes are detrimental to our families and the whole of our society.

However, in most cases, the use of these satellite dishes is against regulations. Therefore with their widespread use in Syria, rumors are growing about their fate and ways to regulate their use. People are divided into two groups with regard to speculation about the use of satellite dishes. One group speculates that since their use is already widespread, the government will, sooner or later, allow their widespread use. The other group argues that the first group's speculation seems impossible because a positive media policy could not place citizens at risk of various negative influences without finding a way to regulate the moral and cultural aspects of society.

In an attempt to settle this argument, AL-MAJALLAH submitted the citizens' querries to Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman and asked him about procedures that would regulate satellite channels and replace unregulated dishes with regulated dishes. Dr. Salman's frankness was adequate to dispel any ambiguities.

Basil al-Asad's Project

While responding to our querries, Dr. Muhammad Salman disclosed information about the establishment of a private company called "The Satellite Channel Distribution Company." Dr. Salman went on to say:

"This company is affiliated with both the General Radio and Television Organization and the Information Ministry. It will regulate and receive satellite channels, then through formal subscription, transmit the programs shown on these channels to the public."

[Munawwar] When was the idea of establishing this company initiated?

[Salman] Frankly speaking, it was the late Staff Major Basil Hafiz al-Asad who initiated the idea of establishing this company. Procedures to establish the company were started toward the end of 1993, i.e., two months before the death of Basil al-Asad.

[Munawwar] What is the goal of this company?

[Salman] The widespread distribution of illegal satellite channels all over Syria was the main reason for setting up the project for the official distribution of satellite channels to the public. The negative influences and dangers of satellite channels are known to all of us as they offer various and varied programs directed toward different age groups that impact on the thinking, behavior, and growth of youth in each of these groups.

[Munawwar] Would the company's task thus be supervisory?

[Salman] The company's task would not be so much supervisory as it would be directed toward using moral, cultural, and social directives that aim at defending youth from the invasion of immoral thoughts.

The Number of Channels

[Munawwar] You are therefore going to choose certain channels. Is there a limitation on the number of channels that will be chosen?

[Salman] The company will receive between eight and 10 channels. It will receive the best programs that are transmitted by international television networks—both Arabic and foreign. These will include news, variety, special, and film shows and programs. The company will then use special appliances that can receive these programs and will install them in homes and offices.

(The single appliance will cost 13,000 Syrian pounds [LS], and the monthly subscription will, depending on the number of channels transmitted, run LS300-500.)

Channels will be chosen according to a questionnaire that will be conducted in order to know the viewers' preferred programs. This system will be first ratified for the two cities of Halab and Damascus and, according to a timetable, the same system will be later available in the rest of the Syrian cities.

In order to serve citizens well and make sure that both picture and sound are clear, the Satellite Channel Distribution Company will choose the best transmitting and receiving stations.

[Munawwar] There is also much talk about a lot of preparation being made by the Ministry of Information and the General Radio and Television Organization for the establishment of a Syrian satellite channel. When will this channel operate?

[Salman] The Syrian satellite channel will officially start its transmission in February 1995. This station will cover the whole of the Middle East, a part of Asia, and the whole of Europe. The Syrian channel will be one of the 10 satellite channels that will transmit programs to the public.

[Munawwar] What will be the fate of the thousands of illegal satellite dishes that are presently on roofs of houses in Syria?

[Salman] The use of illegal satellite dishes in all Syrian cities will be prohibited once the new transmission system is operating.

Afghanistan

'Extremists' Training Camps Seen Growing

JN0701125595 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 6 Jan 95 p 6

[All Afghan placenames as transliterated]

[FBIS Translated Text] The training camps for the Islamic extremists in Afghanistan have recently seen growing activity which evoked the interest and concern of several Arab and western intelligence services. These services have noticed recruitment of new "Arab Afghans" in several countries as well as the organization of trips for them to Afghanistan.

A Western report, prepared a few weeks ago, has revealed ongoing moves to reorganize the so-called "the International Islamic Army" with Afghanistan as its starting point. The report indicated that there are four camps currently playing an important role in training the "Arab Afghans" on using arms, making booby-trapped cars, and carrying out suicide operations. The most prominent camp lies in Shahar Siyab, stronghold of the Hezb-e Eslami led by Hekmatyar; it houses more than 200 Arabs who receive the best training on special operations.

The second camp lies in Kanjak in the district of Lugar; it is said that the official in charge of training is a former Pakistani intelligence officer. The third camp lies in Jubi, whereas the fourth camp lies in the district of Baktia and is considered as the largest camp. The latter camp works day and night and receives more than 500 trainees. The night courses are devoted to those who wish to keep their activities totally secret.

Factional Fighting Threatens UN Peace Mission

BK1001115595 Hong Kong AFP in English 1100 GMT 10 Jan 95

[Report by Terrence White]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Jan 10 (AFP)—Forces loyal to Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani have bombed an airbase south of Kabul in response to attacks by rival factions against Ghazni, the provincial capital, military sources said Tuesday [10 January].

"Last night our jets bombed the enemy's airstrip in Logar," a pro-Rabbani military commander told AFP.

He said the Dasht-e-Sakhawa airstrip had been used over the past four nights by the alliance forces of Golboddin Hekmatyar and Uzbek General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam to fly some 400 troops from northern Afghanistan to south Kabul.

Four days ago, Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami faction fighters were alleged to have attacked the provincial capital Ghazni, 145 kilometres (90 miles) south of Kabul, but were repelled in a counter-attack that included strikes by pro-Rabbani jets, the military sources said.

Ghazni is reportedly back under the control of forces loyal to Governor Qari Baba, who is an ally of Rabbani. According to pro-Rabbani military sources, the Dostam reinforcements were intended to bolster Hekmatyar's military efforts against Ghazni.

The renewed fighting came in the middle of a peace mission by UN special envoy Mahmud Mestiri, who Tuesday was scheduled to meet Dostam in Mazar-e Sharif in northern Afghanistan before flying to the western capital Herat.

Mestiri has the difficult task of arranging a power transfer from Rabbani, whose two-year term ended December 28, to an interim ruling body. The composition of that body has yet to be agreed.

The UN has reportedly proposed an interim body of 18 made up of one representative from each of the nine main mojahedin factions (excluding faction leaders Rabbani and Hekmatyar), plus another nine Afghans, half of whom are influential inside the country and half of whom are well-respected expatriate personalities.

There is no agreement yet on the composition of the second nine Afghans. The UN favours at least four political figures from the era of former Afghan King Zahir Shah, while the pro-Rabbani mojahedin apparently accept only two and want to include Rabbani's lieutenant, ex-Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud.

The views of Hekmatyar and his allies, Dostam and Shiite Hezb-e Wahdat faction leader 'Abdol Ali Mazari, about the composition of the intrim body are not known.

A further stumbling block to a peace settlement in Afghanistan is what kind of elections should take place to decide a new national leader and government.

Debate covers two options: a national assembly called a Shoora or Loya Jirga favoured by pro-Rabbani factions, and a one-man one-vote system favoured by Hekmatyar's alliance.

The peace process also faces difficulties over concessions to be made concerning the opening of all national highways for the free flow of traffic, and the establishment of a neutral security system for Kabul.

President Rabbani Discusses Internal Crisis

LD0701215595 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 7 Jan 95

[Interview with President Borhanoddin Rabbani, by unidentified correspondent of Nangarhar Province radio and television on 6 January; place not given—recorded; questions in Pashto, answers in Pashto or Dari as specified]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] Esteemed and dear brother Professor Rabbani, president of the ISA, I thank you for accepting our invitation despite being very busy. And taking the opportunity I ask my first question. Esteemed professor, recently you went to Morocco to participate in the session of an Islamic gathering. Please tell us what was the outcome of your visit.

[Rabbani, in Pashto] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. You know the Islamic gathering's session was held as a normal session. [Words indistinct] the membership of Afghanistan was restored. In the session talks were conducted on Islamic issues—various issues. Important decisions were made. The Afghanistan problem, which is one of the important issues of the Islamic world, was also discussed. In this respect too decisions were made—about peace, security in Afghanistan, and the reconstruction of Afghanistan. And all Islamic states emphasized the fact that peace and stability should be restored in Afghanistan and foreign intervention should cease, that the people of Afghanistan should be helped, and that the Islamic world should assist in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Similarly talks were held with leaders of the Islamic [countries], and the views of the people of Afghanistan—the views of the Islamic state were explained to them in detail.

[Correspondent] Your presidential term ended on 10 Jadi [31 December] [words indistinct].

[Rabbani, in Pashto] [Words indistinct] the Islamic state wants peace and the Islamic state has never insisted on prolonging its authority by force and weapons. [Words indistinct] You know that the Muslim nation of Afghanistan declared its will in the Resolution and Settlement Council. On the basis of this will and of agreements that were concluded in Islamabad, Jalalabad, and in Mecca, we have always said that we would be ready for this matter when a sensible, logical, and representative mechanism is established, and for the power to be transferred to this mechanism. [Words indistinct]

[Correspondent] What are your views and proposals about the current crisis in Afghanistan?

[Rabbani, in Dari] As I have pointed out earlier, the issues in our country must be resolved by talks and by understanding between the Afghans, themselves. All the country's problems, political difficulties and others [words indistinct] must be resolved by talks and understanding. [Words indistinct] Regarding the issue of who is responsible for the present destruction, [words indistinct] the Muslim must take a direct part in the solution of issues and not let them become more complicated, or the crisis become broader. We believe that action for the resolution of our problem today and tomorrow must be taken in conformity with the Islamic shari'ah. Any problem, and difficulty or any disagreement that arises must be assessed on the basis of Islamic principles. There is no issue in the world on which two opposite sides can both be right. Definitely, one is right and the other is wrong, or one may be closer to right, and the other closer to wrong. For this purpose all the people, in particular those sides who can take part in the resolution of the problem, must take part.

Another issue which has intensified our difficulties, is outside interference. We must openly state this fact that our internal crisis does not only have internal dimensions. It was not merely an internal crisis or conflict. It was not a struggle, as some say, for power. Actually it was for the implementation of objectives through a number of individuals who triggered the fighting; these objectives have been dragged in from outside the borders and outside of Afghanistan. [Words indistinct]

The problem should be resolved inside Afghanistan, the Afghans should find a solution for it. We prefer a domestic solution, but as Afghanistan is thus far a member of the United Nations, we give a positive reply to the positive UN efforts. I believe that the UN efforts will bring fruit when the UN efforts are in conformity with Afghanistan's conditions and situation [words indistict].

They [opposition forces] keep on saying that we have seized power by force and want to keep it by force. For many months the Islamic State has been giving this assurance that the state is ready to transfer power when a mechanism is set up or a way is found through which a transfer of power can be made in Afghanistan. [Words indistinct]

[Correspondent] Esteemed professor, what will be, in your opinion, the future of the alliance between the High Coordination Council and General Dostam? [Rabbani, in Dari] As I said the Islamic state—we should—the internal problem of Afghanistan should be resolved through jihadi organizations, the nine jihadi organizations. The organizations which are official, we, jihadi organizations that are official, the organizations, which have not been established on the basis of Islam, are not official; and the issues should not be made complicated because they are not directly involved in decisionmaking. About the militia—the fighting should cease. And the problem of fighting in Afghanistan should be resolved on the basis of a program which is in the interest of the people. But for the smaller parties, other than the nine parties, to become official, the Islamic state has clearly said in this respect that it is absolutely against the militia men's party becoming official, and it does not agree with this.

[Correspondent] Esteemed Professor Rabbani, recently a movement by the name of Taleban [religious seminary students] has appeared in Kandahar and other parts of the country. What is your analysis and assumption in this respect, and how do you see the role of these kind of changes in the future?

[Rabbani, in Pashto] We [words indistinct] consider the Taleban's efforts, which have been established to remove the checkpoints and to prevent the illicit acts, an Islamic act. [Words indistinct] We welcome their Islamic efforts. Surely, our demand is that they play a positive role in resolving the present crisis of Afghanistan. I hope it does not turn into yet another party beside the other parties. [Words indistinct] and they should try to fulfill their Islamic responsibility in the field of the propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice, should join with other mojahedin so that peace is restored across the country, and so that the opponents of shari'ah will not be allowed to try to restore a non-Islamic regime. They should not allow the development [word indistinct] of corruption and immoral acts. In this respect we welcome their positive efforts and assist them. [

[Correspondent] Esteemed professor, are the Taleban guided by some country or other, or do they have links with you?

[Rabbani, in Pashto] I am of the opinion that their efforts have come about by themselves. Taleban are not a political group, and I am confident that they have emerged on the basis of their Islamic feelings. So far their movement is a completely healthy movement. And so far their movement is completely sound. They have no links with the state. Some foreign countries, which have some goals in Afghanistan, may well want to interfere to create this kind of movement among the mullahs and Taleban. [passage omitted]

On the basis of Islamic knowledge, they should not allow anyone to extend his hand from abroad to interfere in their movement. [Words indistinct]

[Correspondent] Esteemed Professor Rabbani, as a result of the cooperation and efforts of the Jihadi Council of Nangarhar, for a month now Nangarhar Radio-Television has been broadcasting. What are your instructions and recommendations on the standards on which our programmes should be based?

[Rabbani in Dari] First of all I congratulate our hero and mojahed brothers, the Nangarhar Council, and all mojahedin of Nangarhar, and the God loving and faithful people of Nangarhar. [Words indistinct] God says in those verses: Oh Muslims, fear God and when you talk utter strong words. [Word indistinct] from an Islamic point of view speaking is a responsibility. Propaganda is an Islamic responsibility. The direction of propaganda must be clear. Propaganda must not be irresponsible. In the press strong, directing, and guiding words should be said so that our society goes toward reform and knowledge. Our publication and propaganda movement should be constructive especially in the current circumstances in which we are in a new stage of our history and life. We do not only need material reconstruction. We need ideas and moral reconstruction too. Islamic values and principles should be explained in our society. Our future generation should be educated in keeping with Islamic principles. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] What is your message for the people of Nangarhar to be conveyed by Nangarhar Radio and Television?

[Rabbani, in Pashto] [Words indistinct] Again my wish is for the Muslim people of Nangarhar and hero mojahedin, who have shown profound heroism and at a when we are in the stage of the reconstruction, to defend the national unity of Afghanistan and the introduction of Islamic Shari'ah and for the people of Nangarhar to do their best to fulfil their part, their Islamic responsibility. And I am confident that the people, ulema, and commanders of Nangarhar are aware that the people of a province are not only responsible for their province but for the country as a whole. [Words indistinct] And a strong central state be able to discharge its responsibility in all provinces. I thank you. [Words indistinct]

[Correspondent] Thank you for allowing us to interview you.

India

Articles Preview Brown's Expected Jan Visit

'Vital Stakes' Involved

BK0801144495 Madras BUSINESS LINE in English 3 Jan 95 p 20

[Article by B.S. Raghavan: "Playing for High States Without Taking Chances"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALL omens thus far point to the visit of the US Commerce Secretary, Mr. Ron Brown, to India, scheduled to take place in January 1995, getting off to an auspicious start and progressing to a happy ending. That the US is keen to cultivate India as its major business and trading partner is evident from Mr. Brown's impressive entourage of 90 US businessmen, including the CEO's of 25 top companies. Obviously, the US has sufficient faith and confidence in the vitality of the Indian democratic system and in the durability and broad acceptance of the ongoing economic reforms not to let the uncertainties facing the Congress Party and the Government upset the schedule.

On the contrary, the spadework done by the US Under Secretary of State for International Trade. Mr. Jeffrey E. Garten, during his visit in mid-November, as a curtain-riser to the forthcoming Presidential Business Development Mission led by Mr. Brown, bears the unmistakable hallmark of a determined effort to make a success of it.

Indeed, there has been a perceptible shift from the earlier belligerent booing-and-shooing with Super-301 and other like taunts and threats on the part of the US to much cooing-and-wooing about India, a big emerging market, being central to US interests. These conciliatory gestures have now been climaxed by the latest accord on the vexed question of textiles and garments from which India's present export valued at $1 billion can benefit to a substantial extent.

In emphasising "the tremendous promise and opportunity that the US-Indian relationship" and "the need to forge ever-stronger, mutually beneficial, commercial relationships", Secretary Brown even harked back to 1833, when Bostonian Frederick Tuder shipped huge blocks of ice dug out of the frozen lake near his home to Madras (which boasts an Ice House meant precisely to receive the stuff.). Mr. Brown has won his spurs as a skilled negotiator in similar missions to other countries, the most recent and notable one being to China where he sewed up deals worth $6 billions.

There are two features of the Presidential Mission which also constitute its strengths. First, it is truly Presidential in that the driving force behind it is none other than President Clinton himself. In a letter to Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao. as early as in September, he had laid forceful stress on getting out of the visit concrete recommendations for "actions each Government might take to facilitate and advance Indo-US commercial co-operation".

At critical turns and twists during his Commerce Secretary's road-shows, Mr. Bill Clinton himself takes a hand (as the King of Saudi Arabia and President of Brazil will ruefully testify!) by directly contacting, coaxing and cajoling heads of State/Government to win points for the US. And well he might, for it is imperative for Mr. Clinton, besieged as he is by Republican majorities in both Houses, to create 13 million American jobs by 2000 by boosting exports to shore up enough political ballast before the next Presidential election. No effort is too great to achieve it, since each billion dollar worth of sales translates itself into 200,000 jobs.

The second feature, which is a corollary of the first, is inherent in the work ethic of developed countries. Those who have sat across developed country teams at the negotiating table have never failed to be impressed by their comprehensiveness. Perfect sense of coordination without missing a cue, blend of toughness and resilience, and mastery of detail in contrast to the easy-going, playing-it-by-the-ear, sloppiness characterising the approach of most developing countries, naively hoping to prevail, as the former Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Ramphal, put it, by sheer "rhetoric and volume of noise".

None knows this better than Dr. Manmohan Singh who, as Secretary-General of the South Commission, wrote graphically in its report, The Challenge to the South, about the countries of the South allowing themselves to be pushed around by not getting their act together. Since then, the world has become unipolar for which the US has given to itself the power of attorney.

Even as it is, of all the developed countries, the US goes to amazing, if not awe-inspiring, lengths and depths to cull facts, build up briefs and work out negotiating positions: the members of the Presidential Mission, with Mr. Clinton himself breathing down their backs, are bound to have geared themselves for the forthcoming negotiations even beyond the customary standards in these matters.

If it does not want to be tripped up or outmanoevered, the Indian negotiating side should give a really convincing demonstration of both persuasiveness and responsiveness, backed by thorough going preparation that takes no detail for granted. The members of not only the official teams but also those of business and industry from India should speak with one voice, avoiding cross-talk and contradictory stances.

More than all, there should be clear understanding and analysis of the vital stakes involved and expectations of the outcome (as illustratively shown in the two boxes). And the whole enterprise should be masterminded by, and be under the baton of, a PrepCom (Preparatory Committee) headed by the Prime Minister himself who, quite conceivably, will be at the receiving end of Mr. Clinton's phone calls while the visit lasts!

By now there should have been several rehearsals, with questions flung by Devil's Advocates (The U.K. Prime Ministers and the US Presidents willingly undergo this kind of drubbing even in preparation for important press conferences). The fact that none is in the know of whether all this is, in fact, going on behind the scenes is in itself disturbing.

Report Itemizes Expectations

BK0801150295 Madras BUSINESS LINE in English 3 Jan 95 p 20

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India's expectations from the US...

1. Persuading the US to give up the Superman syndrome by flaunting Super-301 and other trade sanctions in violation of GATT agreement or by a holier-than-thou invocation of human rights, nuclear non-proliferation treaty. etc. as preconditions for trade relations.

2. Sensitising the US to the importance of the middle path in the special circumstances prevailing in India.

3. Heading off proposed US amendments to its Immigration Act of 1990 virtually reducing the flow of Indian professionals to a trickle (around 10,000 out of a proposed global ceiling of 65,000) and imposing the unduly restrictive condition on US employers to show that employment of Indian professionals are an absolute an unavoidable necessity in view of non-availability of locals.

4. Easing anti-dumping curbs, especially on India's steel imports.

5. Obtaining a firm commitment for the removal of the quotas under the Multifibre Agreement by 2005.

6. Securing US agreement on a time-frame for cutting tariffs for manufactured products by one-third and doing away with tariffs in respect of pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, construction equipment, steel, agricultural equipment, paper, furniture, beer, brown distilled spirits and toys.

7. Broadening market access in US to India's agricultural and aquacultural products and to that end converting all non-tariff barriers such as variable levies, import bans, import quotas etc to transparent tariff equivalents by July 1, 1995.

8. Providing to India's engineering, manufactured, electronics and computer software products and services a market share, including a specified share of Government procurement, commensurate with its capabilities.

9. Agreeing on a code of conduct for American companies to improve Indian access to US technology, to put in place programmes for skills enrichment, building up human capital, providing for structural capital for management information, networks, online databases etc, to augment knowledge assets and to follow the policy of sustainable development without causing a drain on resources or damage to environment.

10. Building an enduring edifice of mutually reinforcing economic security and advancement through relations not only on the Government-to-Government plane but, increasingly and rapidly, on business-to-business, professional-to-professional, farmer-to-farmer and people-to-people planes. ...Washington's from Mr. Ron Brown's visit

1. Aiming, at a substantial part of the estimated investment of $100 billions infrastructure projects in the next five years.

2. Increase in US exports of aircraft and air traffic control equipment from the present annual average or $100-200 millions by at least five times.

3. Possibilities or $100-200 millions of US exports annually of telecommunications products and services, especially switching equipment and paging and cellular services.

4. Rise in US sales of petroleum exploration and refining equipment and services, currently averaging at $100 millions annually.

5. Deriving the maximum advantage from the consumer goods sector holding the-promise of an annual value of $200 billions, in the hope of India eliminating barriers on consumer imports by 1996.

6. Entry into the power, transport, insurance and financial sectors, besides promoting partnerships in the food processing industry.

7. Prevailing upon Indian Government to facilitate exports of American products by removing restrictions on market access, and lowering import tariffs.

8. Full legal protection of intellectual property, patent rights etc.

9. Securing for American firms established in India the same facilities and treatment as for domestic ones in all respects—the core conditionality of the 1984 US Trade and Tariff Act.

10. By these and other means, increasing the level of US exports to India from $2.8 billions in 1993 to an annual, $5 billions.

Police Arrest 'Kingpin' in Uranium Case

BK0901092895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Meghalaya, police have arrested five persons for possessing 3.5 kg of semiprocessed uranium. According to the state director general of police, Mr. D.N.S. Shrivastav, the (?police) have struck a deal with the gang members following a tip-off. While four of them were arrested on Saturday [7 January] with half a kg of the material, the kingpin fell into the police dragnet late last night with 3 kg of the yellow cake. Mr. Shrivastav said that the arrested are being interrogated and samples of the seized material are being sent for analysis. It is the second such seizure during the past four months.

PRC Uranium Seen as Move To 'Bury Hatchet'

BK0701112395 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 7 Jan 95 p 8

[Editorial: "A Good Neighbourly Deal"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Way back in 1963, when New Delhi and Washington signed a nuclear energy cooperation agreement for American help in setting up the Tarapur Atomic Power Station, the world's two largest democracies had moved closer because of India's soul-scarring war with China. After a decade of avowed brotherhood with its neighbour, India had come to the painful realisation that realpolitik and maudlin sentiments were as different from each other as chalk and cheese. The US then moved into the emotional void. The nuclear energy cooperation agreement was part of a series which included supply of military hardware. Within a year, in October 1964, the Chinese exploded an atomic device. Three years later the two US-built Boiling Water Reactors began functioning. All appeared well with US-India relations.

Somewhere along the way, the relationship began to cool as the US began supplying Pakistan with weapons which encouraged that country to launch the 1965 war. The consequent Russian initiative for a peace agreement between the two belligerents, and the next war in 1971, laid the foundations for firm Indo-Soviet relations and the result and distancing from the US. The nuclear energy cooperation continued till 1982 when the US terminated the agreement to supply fuel to Tarapur. France took its place. Under the succeeding presidencies, France moved closer to Europe and to the US position on non-proliferation, and its termination of the agreement to supply low enriched uranium (LEU) fuel to the Tarapur reactors last year was but a logical denouement.

The emergence of China as the supplier of LEU to Tarapur should be seen in the light of India and China moving towards constructive engagement. It is the clearest indication of the extent both the countries are willing to go in order to bury the hatchet. While it can be argued that the deal is only commercial in nature, the fact that two countries who fought a bitter war and have an unresolved territorial dispute can conduct such an agreement underlines a few points, the foremost being: There are no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent national interests. The second is that the US attempt to link non-proliferation to business deals cannot hold too much water. Third, the deal has been blessed by the International Atomic Energy Commission [as published] which, in a vote of confidence in the peaceful intent of India's nuclear programme, has elected it the chairman of its board of governors. The most important is that India-China relations are moving into a healthy, pragmatic age. These are points that the US should start thinking about.

Gujarat Nuclear Plant Unit Attains 'Criticality'

BK0801125595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The second unit of Kakrapar Atomic Power Plant in Gujarat attained criticality this afternoon. It will be synchronized with the western grid after some more experiments. The chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. R. Chidambaram; the acting managing director of the Nuclear Power Corporation, Mr. Y.S.R. Parasad, were among the several dignitaries from the scientific community present at the site when the unit attained criticality. Commercial generation of power from the unit will start in about three months' time. The station will contribute a total of 440 megawatts to the western grid the near future.

The minister of state for science and technology, Mr. Bhuvanesh Chaturvedi, has commended the dedicated efforts of the scientists and engineers.

Locally-Built Advanced Missile Craft Dedicated

BK2912154194 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The indigenously built destroyer, INS Nashak, was dedicated to the nation at a function held at the naval dockyard in Bombay today. It marks yet another red-letter day for the Indian Navy. Nashak, a 150-crore-rupee advanced missile craft of Russian design, is fitted with a formidable weapons package comprising surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles, medium-range guns, and (?close-in) weapon systems. The ship which strengthens the country's Western Fleet is propelled by four powerful gas turbines. It is the fastest ship in the Indian Navy as well as among the fastest warships in the world.

Government Asked To Hold Budget Until Elections

BK1001044095 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Election Commission in an unprecedented move has asked the government not to present the general and railway budgets for 95-96 till the polling for assembly elections in five states is completed on 11 March. The secretary to the commission, Mr. K.P.G. Kutty, said this in a communication to the cabinet secretary while intimating the government of the revised election program.

Uttar Pradesh Government Fires 'Nearly 4,000'

BK0701095495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Uttar Pradesh Government has suspended 1,548 striking employees even as the employees continued dharnas [sit-ins], rallies, and human chain programs to press for the acceptance of their demands. With this, nearly 11,000 employees have been suspended and nearly 4,000 have been terminated from the service.

The statewide strike by over seven Lakh state government employees, meanwhile, continued for the 32d day yesterday.

Editorial Urges Review of Foreign Power Projects

BK2412090094 Delhi NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 23 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Their Capital on Their Terms"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is quite possible that we do not know how to generate enough power to meet our requirements. Perhaps we lack the necessary funds. Nevertheless, if we do not know how to assess the pros and cons of the power projects proposed by foreigners, we better get used to remaining in the dark for some time to come. It is a peculiar proposal—while the central government must guarantee a minimum 16 percent profit on whatever foreign investment is made in our power sector, only the concerned foreign firms can decide whether or not a given project is worth the investment. We are not saying that all foreigners are alike or that they are motivated by similar interests. There is no denying the fact that foreign firms from the developed countries have very advanced technical knowledge in the field and three is no harm in benefiting from their expertise. Yet if these projects are to be established on Indian soil in order to meet Indian power requirements and are operated mostly by Indians, should Indians not have just as much competence to judge their utility and viability? Certainly we are not bound to just one foreign company to come and generate power for us. If power generation in India is a profitable proposition, many companies will want to jump into the fray. They will quite willingly give detailed project reports as well as the required clarification upon demand. Are we Indians so inexperienced in the field that we cannot even compare their profitability and decide which ones are good and which are not? If our country, which is achieving the ability to launch satellites into space quite confidently, is not even willing to assess the pros and cons of the power projects proposed by foreigners, it means that the country has abjectly and callously surrendered to the whimsical waves of the new world order and is totally averse to making any effort to assess what is good or bad for it.

This one example is enough to show the levels to which we will be forced to stoop in the name of foreign capital and procuring the latest technology. If we exercise no control over the technology we import, how can we prevent another Bhopal gas tragedy or a similar disaster? The case in point does not concerns our ignorance so much as it concerns international pressure. If the World Bank only allows the use of loans given in the power sector to repay foreign consultants, we will be confronted with a variety of new means of exploitation and extortion. Will the government—so callously insensitive to internal scams and scandals—be vigilant to these external manipulations?

Editorial Urges Action on Rising Inflation Rate

BK2712091994 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 27 Dec 94 p 13

[Editorial: "Double-Digit Again"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After a gap of about four months the inflation rate has again crossed the psychologically depressing double-digit figure with the level recording a 10.2 percent during the week ending December 10. The transition from a nine point-something to 10 points does not make a devastating difference on the ground. But conventional economic wisdom says such a change may spell danger. One reason is that an inflation rate of 19 percent would still be double-digit technically, although it would launch the country on way to acquiring the status of a South American economy. That does not seem to be the danger which India faces. In the past three years of economic reforms the inflation rate has come down from around 15 percent to less than 10, only occasionally crossing the unwelcome barrier. This is evidence of prudent economic management, especially during a period of transition from one system to another. One of the principle objectives of the reforms has been the reduction in the level of fiscal deficit. That objective has not been reached fully as was evident in the Finance Minister's review of the economic trends in the past two years. Still the partial success in cutting down unproductive expenditure is getting reflected in the reasonable stability of the exchange rate of the rupee.

This limited success, however, should not lead to complacence. It is known that the scope for reducing the fiscal deficit is severely limited because the bulk of unproductive expenditure is in the form of servicing public debt. It is essential, therefore, that non-Plan expenditure is not allowed to rise. Of equal importance is to ensure that liquidity in the system does not grow beyond the manageable level. The reduction in the prime rate for base loans and lowering of the statutory liquidity ratio will undoubtedly add to the volume of money in circulation. This, together with the seasonal bank credit that becomes available during the Kharif [autumn] crop in November-December may have caused the latest spurt in the inflation rate. But North Block [Finance Ministry] must cry a halt before prices show a tendency to spiral. A proper price management is not only politically necessary on the eve of an approaching Assembly election in five States, it is cardinal to the success of economic reforms to which the nation is committed. Unless the price spiral is held in check, the impression would continue to grow that economic reforms care little for the poor.

Privatization Efforts Seen as Irreversible

95AS0140A Jaipur RAJASTHAN PARTIKA in Hindi 9 Dec 94 p 8

[Article by Balraj Mehta: "The Race For Privatization"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The government is privatizing the economy, especially industrial and investment related processes on a priority basis, because this process is an important part of the program of structural improvement in the economy. The government wants to rapidly move this program forward, and immense efforts are being made for this. The process of privatization has not yet met with much success. The primary areas connected to the economic infrastructure, which include electricity, mineral oil, telecommunications and steel, have been opened for private investment. But private Indian investment in these areas is negligible. Foreign investment is occurring in these areas. Foreign companies investing here have imposed difficult conditions. They have also demanded high profits and security so that they may be protected against risk in the Indian market. As a result, infrastructural utilities have significantly deteriorated, and the overall prospects of economic development have become obscure.

It is important to note that the government is selling shares of government enterprises so that the treasury deficit may be reduced. The government is privatizing these industries which have been built with a lot of hard work because it is not able to muster the resources for their expansion and modernization. In this process of privatization, the question of answerability has also become subordinate. The management of private industries is answerable to their stockholders. The activation of the process of privatization is also the transfer of responsibility for business decision making. But in this case nothing like this occurred, because most shares of government enterprises have been sold to public financial institutions. There is a large number of private enterprises in India in which goverment financial institutions have invested in a big way. The government has not defined any policy with respect to those institutions. But large numbers of shares in government enterprises have been transferred to government financial institutions so that the government does not have any cash flow problems and also so that it may arrange for capital for private enterprise. In that context it is natural to ask whether it is consistent with the policy of privatization that government and private industrial establishments are both being controlled by people whose risk is merely 5 to 10 percent. The foundation of government establishments is being weakened and its management is being throttled—bureaucratic interference is on the rise.

A State of Chaos

If the principle of increasing profits is accepted and it is assumed to be the basis of efficiency then this mode of privatization will not yield desirable results. It is not surprising that a state of chaos is developing among industrial and trade establishments. This has occurred only since 1991 when the drive for privatization was started. The security of private establishments has never been fully attended to in Indian industry. Private enterprise is deemed more efficient and higher than government industries. All means have been adopted to propagate this illusion. People with vested interests constanly propagate beliefs like these. The paradox is that whenever controls are removed, rules are relaxed, or shares of government enterprises are presented for sale, then private enterprise advocates cost controls or other controls based on natural selection or logic. Private enterprise does not have the resources to acquire shares in government industries on a large scale.

After independence it used to be said that for the country's industrial progress the government will gather direct resources; now in the cycle of liberalization and globalization, the government's role in socio-economic development has been reduced and foreign entrepreneurs are being encouraged in the government and private arenas. They are being given owenership rights in both areas. Also they are being given permission for freely importing goods. The gates have also been opened for foreign investment. All attempts to improve the management structure of government industries and to give them autonomy have been abandoned. Under the privatization program the government has said that the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices [MRTP] law will not be applicable to the regulation of firms. The protection of local and small industry products has been so weakened that it has become difficult for them to work. Full freedom is being given for the import of technology, and people interested in imports are being given permission to import at will. No attention is being paid to the fact that the indigenous program of progress and research and the work of actualizing these in practice will be adversely affected. In addition, the rules dealing with the termination of companies and winding up the business of bankrupt companies have been made simpler. It has also been made clear that the government will not be free to determine the price or purchase of goods. These enterprises have also been deprived of opportunities to obtain capital and loans at favorable conditions. So far government policy relating to price and distribution controls is still dual, but attempts to create alternatives to import are being abandoned.

Industrial establishments in India are mostly involved in producing goods by assembling parts, and are motivated by the desire to increase their own profits rather than any general good. In India private enterprise either was never inspired in the direction of industrial progress on a self-dependent basis, or its momentum in this direction was sluggish. Later many economic, social and political discrepancies arose in this. Initially foreign cooperation was limited to obtaining new technology and integrating it with Indian requirements. The scope of this has been increasing to the point where not only is technology being replicated, but also the role of foreigners in finance, marketing and management has become decisive. All this is happening in the name of economic improvement programs. The principle of business is no longer based on any broader social responsibility—it has been reduced to the earning of wealth for personal gain. Foreign cooperation has become an instrument for profiteering by Indian and foreign traders. In this context it does not appear surprising that foreign multinational companies easily find allies among Indian traders and industrialists.

The Indian government was foreed to adopt the path of liberalization under pressure in its effort to re-establish parity in the balance of payments. At that time political conditions were also passing through a cycle of uncertainty. Government policies became such that Indian government and private enterprises were forced to play a subordinate role to foreign entrepreneurs - managers of government enterprises still oppose this. Some professionals too, who consider unequal competition with foreigners unfair, oppose this. Large Indian entrepreneurs who support foreign cooperation for immediate gains, also demand protection. In such a situation, clashes are natural among the Indian business community. This will have social and political repercussions.

Inequities Will Increase

Worldwide political experience says that privatization is not the solution to economic improvement in developing countries. Neither the rate of economic progress nor efficiency is increased by this. There are also many hurdles to its success. When the program of privatization is activated, its results are not going to be very good. When the government sells properly operating factories, the profit will undoubtedly accrue to those people who are already prosperous. This will further increase social inequities. Prices of essential commodities and services will increase, there will be lay-offs in factories, national wealth will be ravaged, and indigenous capabilities will not be fully utilized. It is possible that some important industries will be shut down. The negative results of privatization are already being felt in India.

Election Debacle Impact on Congress Analyzed

Devastating Defeat

95AS0138A Varanasi AJ in Hindi 12 Dec 94 p 6

[Article by Shashi Shekhar: "The Difficult Days of Narasimha Rao"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Narasimha Rao is facing a difficult time. The Vidhan Sabha [state parliamentary] elections held in the four states have proved that he does not possess the power to attract voters. If this was not true then Congress (I) would not have faced such a shameful defeat in Andhra, his home state. The party defeats in Karanataka and Sikkim have confirmed that his assertion that his administration is free to do anything in the name of development and stability in the country is futile. By decisively losing, state-level Congress politicians may have to face New Delhi imposed reshuffling. Not only will this influence the February elections in the six states but the public outcry will keep on unnerving Congress elite until the Lok Sabha elections scheduled for 1996.

Even Rao couldn't have imagined such a devastating defeat in Andhra Pradesh. His son P.V. Ranga Rao himself lost his seat. Rao and his fans, based on the ideals of democracy, can say that P.V.Ranga Rao's loss is not the personal loss of the prime minister. But the Indian politics that thrives on succession has no room for such logic. Is it not legitimate to say that the prime minister who controls the reigns of the High Command, and is defeated in his own home state, does not have the appeal to attract the voters in his camp. It is also worth noting that after Rajiv Gandhi's demise, Indian politics lacks charismatic people. It is apparent that due to the lack of attractive faces politics will now be more affected by the actions of the politicians then by their looks. The election results from the four states confirm that the public does not endorse Rao's policies.

Current party members like Arjun Singh, Sharad Pawar, Narayan Dutt Tiwari can now openly confront Rao. No one will hesitate to demand that the prime minister should focus on the party organization and the failing foundations of the government. The Congress was in power in the states in which it embraced defeat. The party organization of this party with a national character should not have weakened to the extent of permitting such a disgraceful defeat. With this defeat, what does the future holds in Uttar Pradesh [UP] and Bihar? There the party is in an even more miserable plight. In these states, the power rests in the hands of two casteist personalities [Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Yadav] to whom Rao and Company have surrendered to protect their selfish interests. In the privacy of Congress harems it is commuincated in a hush-hush way that Rao has entered into a secret pact with Mulayam Singh and Laloo Yadav. Rao does not want the Congress to prosper in northern India. By so doing he wants to eliminate all challenges from the north. With defeat in the prominent southern states, no one can stop mentioning these open topics which have emerged from the whispers of the past. The southern support which formed the foundation of prime minister's power is now devastated. Clearly it is a golden opportunity for the unsatisfied faction of the party.

Narasimha Rao should get punishment for his deeds. He has tried to use the Congress organization as his own property. He should not forget that he attained this office due to an accident. If Rajiv Gandhi was not murdered, he would not even be in politics. This is an open secret that he had decided to retire from politics and lead a life of an hermit. He had also sent his household goods to Hyderabad. A few days before his [scheduled] departure, that this hidden aspect of his fortune would bring him into such a powerful limelight was beyond his imagination. When the party elected him to its leadership was it not his duty to take the party to those heights of democratic principles that it enjoyed before Indira Gandhi's tenure and that once was its glorious identity?

Was Congress ever the personal property of despotic rulers at the time Narasimha Rao stepped outside the Congress boundary? Certainly it was not so. Even after Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress party was a party decorated with the highest traditions of democratic principles. Indira Gandhi upon assuming power may have become an empress but her strength came from her great lieutenants. In the South great leaders like Brahamanand Reddy and Kamraj, in the West Morarji Desai, and in the North Dwarka Prasad Misra were, though not prime ministers, as respected as the prime minister. Indira Gandhi got rid of all of them. She initiated the effort of changing a democratic party into her own estate. After her, Rajiv Gandhi completed the process. Rao may not accept this truth but certainly those days should have been bitter for him when he served under the grandson of a person with whom he started his effort to touch the pinnacle of political glories. It is needless to say I am referring to Jawaharlal Nehru and his grandson Rajiv Gandhi. Mr. Rao is from that breed of politicians which knew the true meaning of political values and principles. At the time when he was about to bid adieu to politics during Rajiv Gandhi's time these values and principles had fully vanished.

Rao's success in achieving the highest rank in the party and the government, certainly inherited the responsibility to restore the party and to relieve it of family successions and from dictatorial tendencies of its leaders. But he acted exactly in an opposite fashion. He tried to suppress all those voices that he disliked, exactly in the tradition of Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. The Faridabad Congress Convention is an example. The way he treated Narayan Dutt Tiwari whom he had himself appointed [State Congress President] in Uttar Pradesh proves that his allegiance to party is not that expected of a seasoned politician like him. If he had not been flexible on principles, he would not be able to accept any subservience, without hesitation, from Indira Gandhi after Jawaharlal Nehru, and from Rajiv Gandhi after

Indira Gandhi. Such flexibility can provide a bureaucrat an opportunity to flourish but not prove him a leader. Does the Congress's defeat not reverberate this fact?

As Rao has sown so will he reap, although he does not lack the support of hollow logicians. They will try to confuse people by saying that due to favoritism, old age, an attractive new wife, and the family feud N. T. Ramarao will not be able to steer the political power with full capability. In the end the Congress will emerge as the beneficiary. It will also be said that it is not necessary to make noise about the mere loss of four states. A year ago the same Narasimha Rao had unseated the Bharatiya Janata party [BJP] in three states, with the return of Congress in two of them. But this logic may not console Rao now. The reason for the BJP's defeat was different. The Babri mosque destruction had happened only a few days before. This had not only scared the Muslims but staunch and enduring Hindus were also internally shaken. The people of this land are accustomed to peaceful co-existence and they could not tolerate the fall of the traditional values of co-existence. Another reason for the BJP's defeat was that it had not placed any agenda for the development of the country before the public. How long could it (the BJP) have survived in the name of religion? Therefore, the argument of unseating the BJP from the three states will not silence the opposition (Rao is facing).

It is true that Rao supporters by spreading such destitute stories have pushed the Congress into its present condition. There are no two opinions about the fact that the Congress is still the only party with a national appeal and character. It has volunteers in every nook and corner of the country. These volunteers are full of anger about the cowardice and stupidity of their leadership. They want to be delivered from this frenzy. It should not be surprising if their efforts spring up with agitated vigor. Rao has not only provided this opportunity to his opponents by losing elections in his home and other states but he has opened the door for the volunteers to openly display their dismay. His opponents will certainly try to alter this splinter into a ball of fire. Rao should get ready to face these realities.

Need for New Leadership

95AS0138B Varanasi AJ in Hindi 12 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Self-Analysis Necessary"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Congress's defeat in Andhra Pradesh and Karanataka has clearly demonstrated that Congress is devoid of any nationally known figure. It is evident that Indira and Rajiv Gandhi's Congress was different then Narasimha Rao's Congress. Under Congress leadership through [the time of] Rajiv Gandhi, the party was capable of exercising controls to retain party unity. It was capable of deciding issues. The leaders had foresight. They had the courage to take risks and they could visualize the party's interests. Now it is different. The entire nation knows that Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's projected image in his role as the Congress leader is that of an unorganized person. During his three years in office the prime minister has not established himself as a decision maker. In serving as a protector of the parliamentary seats of the southern members, prime minister Rao has demonstrated by his actions that he is infected by the love for the South. Rao is the first Congress prime minister who has shown his utter inability to monitor the actions of the unsatisfied party members in the states. The Parliamentary Board and the Congress Working Committee [CWC] may show formal faith in Rao's leadership but the working level sees him as a weak prime minister and a unsuccessful party president. During the election campaign in the South his public statements had the opposite effect [of that intended]. The voters did not understand his policies on economic reforms. His advocacy of multinational companies entry into the [Indian] market was also futile. He was not accepted in his home state Andhra Pradesh where he was a native son. The Congress suffered a shameful defeat in the home state of the prime minister and the party president. The opposition demand for the prime minister's resignation carries some weight.

If the Congress does not learn from its defeat in the four states and does not modify its policies, leadership, and working process, its impoverishment in the coming February [rescheduled in March] elections in six other states is quite possible. The last five years has seen at least twenty Vidhan Sabha [State Parliamentary] elections. The Congress did not show impressive gains in any of them. The Working Committee has analyzed the election defeats in the four states. It has decided that not only should the party should do some soul searching but each member should also personally examine the recent emergence of an anti-Congress platform not only in the North but in the South too. Why are the activities of unsatisfied party members in the states on the rise? Why did S. Bangarappa form a [breakaway] Karnataka Congress Party [KCP] in Karnataka? If Bangarappa had not left the Congress, it would have captured at least 50 seats in Karanataka. In 1989 the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] was able to secure only 4 seats. This time it won 40 seats. It is obvious that the BJP strengthened its hold tenfold. Both Andhra and Karnataka were considered Congress strongholds, but to demonstrate that they are second to none on the issue of the reservations, betrayed the Congress. According to the prime minister the entire world was watching the Andhra election results. If it is true then his economic policies were also being scrutinized. It is evident that these three states did not admire the Congress policies. The return of the Janata Dal [JD] in Karnataka and Telgu Desham [TDP] in Andhra has proved that the Congress has lost its popular support both in the North and in the South. The defeat of the Congress in Andhra has proved that Rao's continuing leadership is not in the interest of Congress.

The beginning of the end of the Congress has started but the Congress has faced situations like this in the past too. The history of the Congress is full of its rise and fall.

Does it mean that the suggestion of certain leaders for Sonia Gandhi to come forward and to assume the leadership has any substance. Narasimha Rao cannot be trusted anymore as the party president. The Congress has accepted its defeat, but the party, habituated to idol worship, is still not ready to accept that P.V. Rao has utterly failed to maintain and strengthen party unity. Last September, when State Congress Chairman Pandit Narayan Dutt Tiwari demanded to revoke the Center's support for the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party [SP-BSP] government in Uttar Pradesh [UP] and to dismiss it, the High Command, certain of its yes-men had said that the dismissal of the Mulayam government would adversely effect the elections in the South and the Congress would taste defeat in Andhra and Karnataka. Now after the elections this question has become alive again. The Prime Minister and the Congress (I) President P.V. Narasimha Rao should now tell the Uttar Pradesh Congress leaders and the workers why the Congress was wiped out in the South in spite of not-dismissing Mulayam Singh Yadav's government. The Congress High Command meaning P.V. Narasimha Rao, who disgraced the defender of the government [Mulayam Singh] formed by the backward classes and the state party president [Tiwari] of his own party, was not supported by the backward and oppressed classes of the South. Why did the Congress get only 42 percent of the Muslim votes in Karnataka. The former [Congress Party] Karnataka Chief Minister, Moili should also respond. Now the people should decide who possesses better foresight Narayan Dutt Tiwari or P.V. Narasimha Rao.

Congress Must Redress Neglect

95AS0138C Jalandhar PUNJAB KESARI in Hindi 13 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Why Did Congress Lose the Elections; What Will Happen Now?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The unprecedented defeat of the Congress (I) in two small states, Sikkim and Goa, and in two large states, Andhra and Karnataka, has sent a heat wave in the midst of the cold temperatures. This defeat has puzzled everyone including politicians and academicians because none could correctly guess the situation.

No one believed that the BJP, which had only four seats in Karnataka, would capture 40 and become the second ranking party in the Vidhan Sabha.

Not only this, in these elections Kanshi Ram's party, BSP was also fully wiped out. It secured only one seat in Karnataka and that too with great difficulty. Although Kanshi Ram had announced his candidates with great pomp and show.

As far as the Congress's defeat in Andhra Pradesh is concerned, we in our article dated September 10, "Who Will Win in Andhra Elections", had written that in Andhra the Congress (I) then in power, was divided into seven different factions, and in Kuddappa the strong hold of the Member of Parliament Dr. Rajeshwar Reddy, the state Chief Minister Vijay Bhaskar was not allowed to address a public meeting in the presence of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. Serious commotion and uproar dominated the meeting and shoes were thrown. The chief minister felt very sorry about this incident and was ready to tender his resignation. Narasimha Rao somehow pacified him.

In this article we also wrote that the unsatisfied members of Congress had warned the prime minister that the Congress would not win more then 80 seats out of the 294 at stake.

The Congress tried its best to win the Muslims but a Muslim leader from Hyderabad told me that the Congress has done nothing for the Muslims of Hyderabad. Scarcity of power, industrial inefficiency, and their merger with Maharastra are some issues people are really concerned about. Developmental work in Andhra is not up to speed and whenever the Congress rose to power riots broke out. Nothing like this ever happened during Telgu Desham's rule. At the end of our article we had written: "No doubt the Congress appears to be confident about victory in Andhra but the popular belief is that the Congress and Telgu Desam party will have a serious contest and it will not be as easy for the Congress to win as it thinks, especially as the people of Andhra have become accustomed to changes and of handing over the power to different political parties."

In regard to Karnataka, we wrote in our Dec 4 article, "What Will the Sealed Boxes of Andhra and Karnataka Say", that no party would be able to obtain a clear majority, the [Karanataka] Vidhan Sabha would be totally mixed up, and if Bangarappa's party could not form a government by supporting any other party then the Congress and Janata Dal would form a coalition government. [We forecast] the BJP to be in third place and to not share power.

In Karnataka on Dec 8, in my meeting with the editor of the "Deccan Herald" who is very close to Bangarappa, he told me that in Karnataka the Congress would return to power. In short, nobody correctly guessed [the eventual outcome]. Whatever I wrote in regard to Karnataka was written on the basis of my reading, I did not go there but my article on Andhra Pradesh was based on my visit and interviews with local people.

Reasons for Defeat

The following are the main reasons for the defeat of the Congress in these states:

- Increase in Costs: During the last few years the cost of living has increased by leaps and bounds. The middle class may not feel its impact so intensely as does the lower class which holds the majority of votes. To them it badly hurts.

* Internal Conflicts: Whereas in Andhra the Congress was divided into seven groups, its internal dissension in Karnataka is common knowledge. Because of these conflicts, during the last five years it has seen five Congress chief ministers. The allegations against Bangarappa can also not be ignored.

* Corruption: Corruption is rampant both in the states and at the center, and people are really fed up with it. No action has been taken against corrupt officials in the states and Narasimha Rao has not bothered to even delve into any corrupt minister in spite of several large scale scandals during his rule. * Opposition Promises: Rama Rao's promise to make rice available for two rupees a kilo and clothing at very cheap prices was also a reason for the Congress defeat in Andhra.

* Lack of charismatic Leadership: The Congress lacks such leadership.

* Lack of grass roots support: Mr. Narasimha Rao do not have as much grass roots support as he should have. He socializes very little.

* Revolt: The unsatisfied party members have always proved detrimental to the party cause.

* Nepotism: The people voted against family associations and wiped out not only the prime minister's son but all other relatives of other Congress leaders contesting the election.

* Seshan's Controls: Mr. Seshan's excessive controls also cannot be disregarded in the Congress's defeat because misuse of governmental resources, control of (polling) booths, and restrictions on unnecessary expenses were imposed. [passage omitted]

A review of election results clearly indicates that Narasimha Rao faces increasing difficulties. It should not be forgotten that Mr. Rao himself had taken a pledge to see that the Congress would succeed in this election. He himself distributed the tickets, was very active in campaigning and presented himself as a native son in Andhra. But he soon realized the fragile state the Congress was in and declared that the results of these elections would in no way affect the center.

If we analyze the political trends in India, we see that the people have cultivated an habit of bringing political change by voting different parties to power. After the Ayodhya case, the BJP governments in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh were changed and when the elections were held it did not return to power in any other state except in Rajasthan. In Himachal the people did not appreciate the BJP doctrine of "No Work No Pay", in spite of being right, and turned over the reigns of government to the Congress.

If we examine the international context, we see that Churchill lost the election after the second World War when he delivered victory to England. Similarly, all was not well with the U.S. economy at the time President Clinton came to power but now in spite of tremendous improvements, it appears that the power is slipping from under him.

The people of this country have realized that corruption and mismanagement is equally rampart in all political parties. Therefore, they keep on voting different parties to power in the hope of improvement. Except in Bengal and Maharashtra this cycle of rotation of power is in full process.

It is true that Narasimha Rao has given a stable government to the country, he has also brought his government from minority to majority status, but he has not acted against the corrupt officials and the people have not taken this kindly. A parallel situation also exists in the states. In Punjab restrictions were implemented on terrorism but corruption is setting new records and no action is taken against the corrupt officials. In this regard these election results are a rebuke and a reprimand against the Congress.

The saddest part of all our elections is what happens afterwards. When Chowdhuri Devi Lal came to power he announced the writing off of all loans, Mulayam Singh Yadav declared cheating in exams O.K., in the name of reservations Laloo Prasad Yadav encouraged castism, and Kumari Jayalalita started to distribute free clothes, toothpaste, free lunch in the schools, and free water in the poor areas. No one did anything to strengthen the state of economy and industry.

The country which had stopped functioning during the times of V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar and under the scandal created by the Bofors issue during Rajiv Gandhi's time has now started to move forward. The gold bullion from other countries has also come back but the common person does not understand these issues, he desires deliverance from the increasing cost of living. He therefore, falls pray to the false hope given by the assurance of reservations and making daily necessities available at cheaper prices. Under such circumstances the question arises where leaders like Rama Rao, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Lalu Prasad Yadav, and Jayalalita are leading the country to? Are they not creating an idle society? If the country has to function on this basis then a child at his birth will be assured of reservation, he will be free to cheat in the exams, he will not have to return any loans, and he will get free water and rice. Why would he then work?

In any case, the central issue is whether Narasimha Rao will relinquish one of the two positions he holds. The answer is no. No doubt [BJP Leader of the opposition] Atal Bihari Vajpaee has demanded his resignation and Masseurs Arjun Singh, Narayan Dutt Tiwari, Balram Jakhar, and Rajesh Pilot have asked for an open discussion in the Working Committee. A demand for the appointment of a caretaker Congress (I) president is also gaining momentum but neither such an appointment will be made nor will Narasimha Rao relinquish the prime ministership. This is because no leader will assume the responsibility of becoming the president of Congress (I) at a time when elections are at the door. As far as the prime ministership is concerned, no member of Congress or the opposition has never relinquished this position, and Rao is also not going to surrender.

The immediate effect of this defeat will be reflected in the budgets for the Center and Congress ruled states. These will tend not to burden the common people, will provide incentives and will be attractive to them. Some consideration to restrict foreign investment will also be given.

In addition, the government will have to be more cautious and will have to understand that issues like corruption, increasing costs, and other wrongdoings influence the public thoughts. All these issues leave an impression on their minds and when they get an opportunity to express themselves they certainly will turn against the ruling party and that is what they did in these elections. This is living proof of their watchfulness and the well being of democracy lies in it.

Iran

Syria Urged to Take 'Firm Stance' With Israel

NC0701140895 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 2 Jan 95 pp 1, 15

[Editorial: "The Leaders in Damascus Should Continue To Be Vigilant"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The chiefs of the Army staffs of the Zionist regime and Syria held covert meetings with Clinton last week. According to the agreements they reached, legal experts and water conservancy specialists are to join the negotiating teams in Washington. News sources have attempted to downplay the importance of this report by projecting it as a private meeting. However, this is the first time that the Zionist and Syrian Army chiefs of staff have met under a common roof, and of the White House at that.

The spokesman of the Zionist regime's prime minister stressed that this issue is to be hushed up and should not be given prominent coverage. However, the NEW YORK TIMES elaborates that the U.S. President has asked Generals Hikmat al-Shihabi and Ehud Baraq, the Syrian and Zionist Army chiefs of staff, to convey his concern at the lack of a clear outcome of the Washington talks to their respective governments and to try to bring their viewpoints closer.

Immediately after this meeting, the Washington officials called on the Cairo regime in no uncertain terms to carry out its assignment to bring the Syrian and Israeli viewpoints closer together and to play a more active role in bringing about a Tel Aviv-Damascus compromise.

By adopting a firm and independent stance and a clear and categorical policy regarding Israel, so far Syria has clearly shown that it does not wish to compromise with Israel unconditionally. However in Washington, Cairo and Tel Aviv intensive efforts are under way to bring Damascus to its knees before Israel.

As part of this assignment, Mubarak asked King Fahd and Hafiz al-Asad to attend a tripartite session in Alexandria with him. Even though the agenda for the talks includes discussions of Israel's nuclear weapons, efforts to boost the Arab League, and Syria's request to end Iraq's years of isolation, it is clear that the main objective of this session and Mubarak's actual assignment is nothing less than bringing Hafiz al-Asad to his knees before Israel.

The remarks by Shim'on Peres are very eloquent in this regard. He does not believe that the Alexandria session will be any obstacle in the path of a compromise by Syria but is pleased that a "new Middle East" is emerging in which the position of the Zionists has been consolidated and considers the Alexandria session a step in this direction. At this meeting, the Saudi Arabian officials accepted Syria's proposal for a halt to the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] trend of improving relations with Israel, but Sa'ud al-Faysal informed his Syrian counterparts that Riyadh will not continue this indefinitely and this lull will not be permanent. It is up to Syria to show some flexibility in accepting Israel's conditions. The reports received indicate that at this session Fahd promised financial aid to Damascus on condition that Hafiz al-Asad be open in displaying flexibility toward Israel's demands.

The clear meaning of the above is that the diplomatic offices of Egypt and Saudi Arabia have been placed at Washington's disposal in order to bring Syria to its knees; and the Alexandria session can precisely be considered an effort to serve the joint demands of the United States and Israel.

In such circumstances the Egyptian lackey writers who are active in the GCC have heavy obligations to shoulder. They are obliged to divert the attention of public opinion from developments in Washington and Alexandria, to cover up the covert behind the scenes issues, and to divert their readers' attention with inconsequential, meaningless, and repetitive issues. Thus the mercenary Egyptian correspondents are assigned a part in the "propaganda artillery of Israel." They are to prepare "fiery material" to disseminate in order to attract public opinion from the actual front so that the real onslaught can take place against Syria on another front and benefit Israel.

It is precisely for this reason that for the past few days the press in the GCC countries have unleashed an amazing propaganda blitz against the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is to divert people so that the Cairo regime can carry out its assignment of bringing Syria to its knees before Israel and so that Syria will feel isolated and alone in this tussle.

Experience has proved that whenever a plot by the United States and Israel is to be implemented in Arab countries, a despicable atmosphere is conjured up against the Islamic Republic of Iran to incite others against Islamic Iran so that attention is deflected from the formulators of these conspiracies, who will then get the necessary opportunity to pursue their objectives.

In such circumstances, it is imperative that the Damascus leaders look at the issues in a vigilant manner and continue to maintain their poised, firm, and revolutionary stance as the "front line of the struggle against Israel." The financial promises of the Riyadh court and the political deception by the Cairo regime should not blind the eyes of the Syrian leaders' to the realities and should not motivate them to take a simplistic and optimistic view and fall prey to the objectives, assignments, and dubious efforts of Riyadh and Cairo for the joint policies of Tel Aviv and Washington.

One may ask what have Egypt and its people gained from the 15-year-long disgraceful Camp David compromise? What have 'Arafat and the Palestinians gained from the shameful Gaza-Jericho accord? Both have achieved nothing but to reduce the Cairo regime—which at one time was the leader of the Arab world—to the position of Israel's footman, and to relegate 'Arafat to the position of a policeman assigned to the suppression of Palestinians.

Israel has deceived the Arab courts and has taken all they have and even what was left of their prestige, while giving the dishonorable Arab courts nothing but a stigma of shame and the eternal hatred of their people.

A perusal of the black performance record of the Arab-Israel compromise will serve as ample warning to the leaders in Damascus. The hope persists that Damascus will continue to act in a vigilant manner. Syria should be assured that even in the event of a compromise with Tel Aviv—may this never come to pass—it will gain no more than what the other Arabs gained.

Velayati Meets With Syrian Foreign Minister al-Shar'

Al-Shar': Israel 'Not Serious' on Peace

LD0601183595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Tehran this afternoon to deliver a message from the Syrian president to President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He was welcomed by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. Speaking at Mehrabad Airport, the Syrian foreign minister participated in an exclusive interview with our correspondent.

He said: The latest regional developments, the current talks between Arabs and the Zionist regime, and issues related to bilateral relations are discussed in the message from the Syrian president to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Emphasizing that the Syrian talks with the Zionist regime are facing serious and fundamental problems due to obstacles created by that regime, Faruq al-Shar' said: Israel is not serious in the peace talks and is trying to put off the implementation of the UN resolutions and the land for peace project.

Criticizing the policy of some Arab countries in signing separate peace treaties with the Zionist regime, the Syrian foreign minister said: Such behavior cannot guarantee a real peace in the region because it fails to enjoy firm regional support. Emphasizing that the Syrian people will not abandon their undisputed rights, he said: Peace with the Zionist regime is only possible if Israel totally and unconditionally withdraws from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon.

Al-Shar's Arrival Statement Reported

JN0601211095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 6 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran—[Syrian] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Tehran today carrying a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He was welcomed by Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Syrian Ambassador in Tehran Ahmad al-Hasan, and a number of senior Iranian Foreign Ministry officials.

In statements to journalists at Tehran airport, al-Shar' explained that the message deals with regional developments, the peace process, and the cordial bilateral relations. He said: I will seize this opportunity to hold talks with Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati on topics of interest to our two countries and peoples.

In response to a question by the Iranian Television on the latest developments concerning the peace process on the Syrian track, the foreign minister said that the peace process on the Syrian track is stumbling due to the obstacles and gaps created by Israel. He added that it is clear to the entire world that Israeli is doing its best to evade the resolutions of the international legitimacy and to reject the land-for-peace principle. He said that he believes that Israel is not serious enough to arrive at a just, comprehensive peace in the region. Meanwhile, he said, Syria adheres to the resolutions of the international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle and insists that peace will not be achieved without Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and southern Lebanon.

The foreign minister expressed amazement at some Israeli rulers' statements claiming that Syria does not agree to negotiate before restoring the entire Golan Heights. He said: By such statements, they are trying to mislead the world public. This is because Syria has been negotiating for three years to fully restore the Golan

Heights. Otherwise, what have we been doing during the past three years? He stressed that the objective of the negotiations is to restore the entire occupied Arab territories and usurped rights. He also stressed Syria's stand and adherence to all its rights. He said that this sound and principled stand expresses the aspirations of the Syrian people, the Arabs, and Muslims.

The foreign minister indicated that people always stand by their leaders who insist on their rights and do not stand by the governments that relinquish the rights of their peoples. He added that the Syrian people strongly stand by their leadership due to its insistence on all their rights and determination to restore the entire occupied Arab territories.

In a separate development, the Syrian Arab and Iranian delegations under Faruq al-Shar' and Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati held a round of talks this evening. They exchanged views on the developments. Discussions focused on the developments of the situation, the peace process, and bilateral relations.

Al-Shar' States Meeting Objectives

LD0701153195 Tehran IRNA in English 1452 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 7, IRNA—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq Al-Shar' here Saturday [7 January] submitted a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to President 'Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Shar' said at the meeting that the aim of his visit here was to exchange views on regional and bilateral issues and reiterate his country's irrevocable stands in its negotiations with the Zionist entity.

He briefed Rafsanjani on regional situation and developments, the outcome of the recent Arab mini summit meet in Alexandria, Egypt and the trend of the so-called "peace talks" in the region.

The Syrian official said despite political and propaganda pressures exerted by the Zionists and their henchmen on the region, Syria was adament to restore its rights and liberate its lands which are now occupied by the usurper regime of Israel.

He expressed hope that Arab states and the Muslim world would support Syria in this respect.

Shar' said "deeply rooted and cordial" relations between Tehran and Damascus would guarantee consolidation of the two sides' stands in the region, adding that solidarity between progressive Arab countries and the Islamic Republic of Iran was "full-fledged."

He added that Syrian officials were fully aware of Iran's regional and international stances and supported them.

President Rafsanjani in return called on Syria, as a country standing in the frontline against the Zionist regime's aggressions by relying on its principled and just positions, not to bow down before Israel's expansionism. He said that Iran had always trusted Syria in its endeavor to preserve joint Islamic and humanitarian stands on the Palestine issue and the struggle against the Al-Qods [Jerusalem] occupiers.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani urged all Muslim countries, especially Arab states, to build up their support for the rights of Palestine and other countries in their confrontation against Israeli aggressors.

Relations Viewed as 'Strategic'

NC0701081795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 7 Jan 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', who arrived in Tehran yesterday, held talks with our Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati on bilateral relations and regional developments. In the first round of talks, the two sides discussed ways and means for broadening bilateral relations and the need to adopt a joint political stance on regional and international developments.

The Syrian Foreign Minister's visit to Tehran has once again provides an opportunity for the officials of Tehran and Damascus to assess joint parameters [preceding word in English] in their bilateral relations and to reinforce them. Among the Middle East countries, Iran and Syria are considered strategic allies. During the course of Iraq's imposed war on Iran and its aftermath these two countries have constantly taken common and unified stances on regional and international issues.

The reason for such relations is the presence of deep-rooted religious, political, economic, and cultural common denominators shared by Iran and Syria. Their coordinated and convergent stances on regional and international issues, especially their opposition to the Middle East peace trend have been so important and fateful that the enemies of Islam have constantly made these two countries the targets of their hostile attacks.

Even though the proponents of the so-called Middle East peace trend have tried by various ways and means to lure Syria to conform to this trend, Damascus' logical and categorical stance on the Middle East peace trend continues to be construed as a major impediment. Faruq al-Shar' said: Syria has not been coerced by the misleading promises of some countries in the past three years; it continues to insist on its rightful stances.

This assumes greater importance if viewed in the context of Tehran's role as Damascus' traditional ally. This Tehran-Damascus union alongside the popular resistance all over the Middle East and the Islamic world against the imposed peace of the Zionist regime and its agents is undermining the efforts of the formulators of the so-called peace in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, some of the Arab governments have accepted this accord and thus engendered a degree of disharmony in the stances of the Islamic countries. These governments should realize that as long as their people are opposed to this trend, their compromise with the Zionist regime will yield no legitimacy or any other benefit for them but will only generate crises. By their actions, these countries have not only not gained any benefits, they have conceded many of their own privileges, and now the Zionist regime is seeking to extend its domination to them.

It appears that now that the sworn enemies of Islam have embarked on an extensive and dangerous war against the Muslims, the unity of the Islamic countries and their closeness and cooperation is the sole means of attaining their objectives and triumphing over the adversaries of Islam.

Al-Shar Confers With Velayati

NC0701072595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' held his first round of talks with Dr. Velayati in Tehran and said: Syria's stance on Israel has not changed in any way and as long as Israel does not withdraw from all the occupied territories in Golan and in southern Lebanon, no accord will be signed with this regime.

According to the Central News Unit, speaking on the Islamic Resistance in southern Lebanon, the Syrian foreign minister stressed that as long as Lebanese territory is under Zionist occupation, the Islamic resistance will continue against the aggressors.

This report states that Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati referred to the surrender of the PLO and some regional countries in the face of the demands of the usurpist Jerusalem regime. He said: Right from the outset the Islamic Republic of Iran believed that no country would receive any benefits from the compromise trend. He stressed that the Islamic resistance is the sole means of salvation for Palestine.

Dr. Velayati emphasized the need for regional disarmament to purge the region of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons, which should include all the countries in the region. He stressed the need for the Islamic countries to have unity and to act jointly for the protection and honor of the Muslims.

Radio Comments on Perry Visit to Israel

NPT Viewed as Main Focus

LD0901204095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, on the second leg of his nine-day tour of the Middle East and South Asia, arrived in the occupied Palestine, Sunday, January the eighth. The U.S. defense secretary, after his arrival in Jerusalem, met and conferred with the foreign minister and prime minister of the Zionist regime. Even though the subject of talks between the sides has not been announced, it appears that the talks are mainly focused on nuclear nonproliferation, getting an assurance from the United States for extension of grant-aid to Israel, and the trend of Arab-Israel talks concerning the Golan Heights.

Evidently, the Zionist regime possesses several hundred nuclear warheads, which has already been disclosed by the Western media, citing satellite pictures.

Regional countries, especially the Arab world, have constantly protested at the possession of the nuclear arsenal by the Zionist regime. In fact, the Zionist regime, by refusing to initial the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] and by not allowing—with U.S. support—the inspection of its nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency, has disregarded international law, similar to numerous other cases.

In this connection, during the first phase of the U.S. defense secretary's visit to Egypt, the Egyptian officials announced that Egypt and other Arab countries would not endorse the NPT next April unless the Zionist regime also joins it.

It is obvious that despite Mr. Perry's remarks about the threat of nuclear weapons production and his efforts in encouraging the Zionist regime to join the NPT, the U.S. remains as an ally of the regime in enlarging the nuclear and nonnuclear arsenal of the Zionist regime.

Earmarking $3 billion in grant-aid to Israel by the U.S. Congress, about which Mr. Perry once again gave assurances to Tel Aviv's officials, is a move in the same direction; $1.8 billion of the aid is set aside for supplying military hardware to Israel.

Now, given the U.S. outlook vis-a-vis the Zionist regime and the goals of the U.S. defense secretary's visit to occupied Palestine, who has clearly said that the U.S. goal is to maintain Israel's military superiority in the region, any changes in the Zionist regime's political, military behavior seems quite remote and improbable.

Perry's Israel 'Agenda'

NC0901083995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 9 Jan 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Simultaneous with the visit by William Perry, the U.S. Defense Secretary to Tel Aviv, the Zionist regime's prime minister attempted to defuse the issue of the transfer of U.S. military technology to other countries.

Yitzhaq Rabin, who on the other hand is under pressure to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] has said: We have not placed the technology on the manufacture of U.S. warplanes at the PRC's disposal and we deny all such reports disseminated in this regard.

Of course, this is not the only issue on William Perry's agenda during his visit to Tel Aviv. This is especially true since in recent weeks Israel has been avoiding joining the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], which has generated an outcry in the region. Meanwhile, the protests against Israel's nuclear programs have proliferated to such an extent that even Cairo officials have called for the Zionist regime to pledge to sign the NPT.

The apprehension of the U.S. military echelons, including William Perry, is because, in view of the current unrest in Israel, technology for manufacturing nuclear weapons may fall into the hands of the Palestinians. It is obvious that with the defeat of the trend toward compromise with 'Arafat and the escalation in the Palestinian attacks on Israeli military installations, the possibility of the Zionist regime's vulnerable nuclear installations being in the line of fire is heightened.

On the other hand, the objections by the regional countries to Israel's nuclear program is not an issue which ultimately can be construed as being of benefit to the United States. In any case, it is obvious that in view of the extensive agreements between the United States and Israel, William Perry is being forced to bring up other issues in his interviews and to make allegations in order to hedge on the more sensitive current issues. Such issues remain in the international public's eye, however, and the people of the region are intensively following them.

Second Stage of Military Exercises Carried Out

LD0901180695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The second stage of the joint military exercises of the Bushehr region's Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps was carried out today.

In this stage of the exercises, deploying a number of helicopters and diving equipment, frogmen from the 2d Naval Zone of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps successfully carried out operations of jumping from helicopters into the sea.

The joint exercises in the 2d Naval Zone of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, which is codenamed Abkavan-73, is being implemented in the northern part of the Persian Gulf with the aim of improving the training and capabilities of the participating forces. These exercises will continue for another four days.

Transport Minister Torkan Addresses ECO Meeting

LD1001092895 Tehran IRNA in English 0517 GMT 10 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 10, IRNA—Minister of Roads and Transportation, Akbar Torkan said here on Monday [9 January] that lack of proper transport facilities either by land or air was an obstacle in the way of economic progress and closer relations between ECO member states.

Torkan speaking in the second meeting of heads of aviation companies of the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states, said development of land, naval and aerial transportation was very effective in economic growth of the ECO member states.

He said since the economic boom of ECO states depended on development of transportation, some projects which are currently deemed impractical at national level could be launched through cooperation of ECO member states.

The minister referred to the recent setting up of the ECO aviation company and said ever since cooperation between the ECO states has increased in the field of exchange of technological know-how, using technical facilities, and coordination at related international forums.

He said the Islamic Republic of Iran seriously followed the joint regional projects of ECO. Iran has done its planning in this regard and was prepared to carry them out. According to Torkan plans of setting up an ECO airline have been finalised and it is expected to start operations by carrying the presidents of member states to the summit meeting to be held in Islamabad in March.

Meanwhile, managing-director of Iran-Air, Hasan Shafti said that intensive cooperation between ECO member states was necessary to attain economic development and that expanding road, naval and aerial transportation networks was on the agenda of ECO. He said linking roadways between member states was also being considered.

According to Shafti aerial links between ECO member states were not only in line with the long-term interest of the states, but also, will boost social and cultural bonds between the nations and broaden political ties.

Secretary-general of ECO, Pakistan's Shamshad Ahmad and representatives of aviation companies of member states were present at the two-day meeting in Tehran. ECO groups together Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Agriculture Official on Distribution Problems

LD0801122995 Tehran IRNA in English 0758 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, 8 Jan (IRNA)—A senior official at Agriculture Ministry announced that a comprehensive project for adjustment of foodstuff marketing will go into effect from March 1995-97.

Speaking to the English-language daily IRAN NEWS, published Sunday [8 January], Deputy Agriculture Minister Gholam 'Ali Shahraki said the plan will solve many current problems in the field of distribution in both domestic and foreign markets.

"This project was introduced in note 79 of the Second Five-Year Economic Plan and needs rls. [rials] two billion for implementation", he said adding that if its goals are met the country would be in a position to provide for its domestic agricultural requirements at fair prices and improve its position in international markets.

Iran is exporting agricultural products to 80 countries, the bulk of which goes to Germany and the Persian Gulf littoral states, Shahraki noted.

Agricultural exports are forecast to rise by 22 percent from the present 16 percent of the total non-oil export products in the second plan, of which farming and horticultural products are projected to have a 71 percent share, the paper quoted him as saying.

According to Shahraki, with the exception of basic commodities such as wheat, rice and oil seeds, Iran's other foodstuff production sector exceeds domestic need and and can be exported.

"With regard to foreign trade of flora and herbs, brisk activity is foreseen in the second plan", stressed the deputy minister.

At present the obstacles that prevent the export of such items are being removed and measures are under way to increase this particular area of sales to the Persian Gulf states in the near future, he concluded.

Customs Office Releases Exports-Imports Figures

LD0801180995 Tehran IRNA in English 1509 GMT 8 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 8, IRNA—Iran exported dlrs. 3,764 million worth of goods and imported dlrs. 20,036 million in the year 1372 (March 21, 1993-March 20, 1994).

Based on a report released by the Islamic Republic of Iran's Customs Office, Iran's export of 5,137,000 tons of goods to 109 countries within the period in the form of border exchanges, transfer of foreign exchanges by the banking system, exports against imports, border transactions as well as by passengers and border dwellers, earned the country dlrs. 3,746 million.

The highest amount of Iran's exports went to Germany and Turkey. some 230,634 tons of goods, valued at rls. 61,956 million, were exported to Germany within the period, while 312,360 tons, worth rls. 26,926 million were exported to Turkey.

Some 83 percent of the commodities were exported by ships within the period, showing little change compared with the preceding year. The remaining 15 percent, that is 46 percent of the total value of the exports, were carried by lorries.

Carpets, fresh and dried fruits, pickled hides and leather accounted for major items exported within the period.

Some 31,293 tons of carpets, with a value of rls. 97,784 million, composed 37 percent of the total value of the exports within the period, indicating about 36 percent of growth compared to the corresponding period over the preceding year.

A main portion of the Iranian goods either in terms of value or weight were exported to Germany, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, China, Italy, Switzerland, Sudan, Japan, France, Britain, India, Canada and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The U.S. by importing about 196 tons of goods, worth over dlrs. 28 million, stood at 21st place in the list of the countries where Iran exported goods within the period.

Iran imported 18,069,000 tons of goods, worth rls. 10,580 billion (dlrs. 20,036 million), within the period, showing a decrease of six percent in terms of weight and 32 percent in terms of value compared to the corresponding period the preceding year.

About 25 percent of the total imports by Iran included capital goods, 62 percent intermediary and the remaining consumer goods.

Import of consumer goods registered over two percent of decline within the period than the preceding year, while intermediary goods showed a rise of two percent in return.

Based on annual statistics periodical, published by Iran's Customs Office, Iran imported goods from 102 countries in 1372, mostly from Germany.

Germany exported 812,000 tons of goods, worth rls. 1,952.5 billion, to Iran within the period.

Japan was the eighth importer from Iran and the second exporter with about 640,000 tons of goods, valued at rls. 1,314 billion.

Italy ranked third by exporting about 311,000 tons of goods, worth rls. 647 billion.

Meanwhile, China exported 650,000 tons of goods to Iran with a combined value of rls. 158 billion, showing a rise of about 25 percent and about four percent in terms of weight and value respectively compared to the preceding year. Iran's exports to China within the period showed 32 percent of decline as well.

Import of goods from Europe constituted about 50 percent of the total value of Iran's imports, followed by Asia with a share of about 37 percent out of the total.

Iran's imports were from Germany, Japan, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, Britain, France, Korea, the U.S., Austria, Belgium, Azerbaijan, Argentine, Turkey and Switzerland.

The U.S. with an export of over dlrs. 824 million worth of goods stood at the eighth place in the list of countries that exported to Iran.

Generally, Iran imported dlrs. 20,036 million worth goods in return for dlrs. 3,746.8 million through exports in the year 1372.

The country's trade balance deficit in the said year was about dlrs. 16,290 million with the exception of oil exports, indicating about rls. 11 billion in balance of payments in favor of Iran within the period compared to the same figure last year.

A deficit of about 77 and 91 percent was registered in Irano-Germany and Irano-Japanese trade balance respectively within the period.

Irano-Turkish trade balance proved relatively favorable in 1372, with Iran's export of dlrs. 384 million and imports of dlrs, 407 million worth goods, and a five percent deficit in Iran's trade balance.

Dlrs. 15,541 million and dlrs. 3,000 worth of goods were exported and imported respectively to and from Afghanistan within the period, and Iran's trade balance with Afghanistan showed about dlrs. 15,538 in favor of Iran.

Irano-Pakistan trade balance proved eight percent in favor of Iran within the period. Iran exported dlrs. 43,766,000 worth of goods to Pakistan, while importing dlrs. 40,134,000.

*Development Projects Become Operational in Fars

95LA0061C Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 26 Nov 94 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Shiraz. IRNA. In the course of the First Five-Year Economic Development Plan, 14,043 development projects have been implemented in the province of Fars.

The director of the Fars Plan and Budget Organization added on Wednesday [23 November]: More than 87 percent of the 321.388 billion rial [R] funds of the First Plan have been absorbed in the province.

Mehdi Mahzun added: Of the above-mentioned projects, 68 percent was allocated to projects concerning social affairs and 28 percent to economic and other general affairs.

He stated: Spending R68.079 billion of the funds of the First Plan, 1,652 projects were implemented in the deprived regions.

The director of the Fars Plan and Budget Organization said: This year, too, R149 million has been allocated to 150 development projects throughout the province.

Petrochemical Plant To Be Built in Lorestan

LD0901111495 Tehran IRNA in English 0912 GMT 9 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khorramabad, Lorestan Prov., 9 Jan (IRNA)—A plant to produce petrochemicals is to be built in this western province in the course of the Second Five-Year Development Plan, 1995-2000, it was announced here Sunday [8 January].

According to the governor general of the province, Mohammadi Zadeh, the fund required for the construction of the plant will be jointly provided by Bank Melli Iran (National Bank), Oil Ministry and the private sector.

In the first phase of its operation the plant is expected to produce some 10,000 tons of polyvinyl acetate annually.

Polyvinyl acetate and its derivatives are used in unbreakable glass, automobile, glue, and paper industries.

Mohammadi Zadeh further added that the initial capital for the construction of factories affiliated to the plant is estimated around dlrs. 10 million, 50 percent of which would be met by Bank Melli, 30 percent by private sector and the remaining 20 percent through Oil Ministry credits.

36 Percent of Refah Shares Purchased by Citizens

LD0701204595 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 7 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] With an unprecedented welcome given by the people to the offer of the shares of Refah chain supermarkets, the existing figures show that more than 100 billion rials of shares have been purchased by people during the first four days that the shares were on offer.

The number of the shares purchased by the people compared to the total shares on offer during the first stage—which was 280 billion rials—shows the extensive welcome shown by the people. Some 36 percent of the shares were purchased.

*Building Begins on Kashan-Natanz-Esfahan Freeway

95LA0061E Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 26 Nov 94 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] The construction of the Kashan-Natanz-Esfahan freeway began on Thursday [24

November] in the presence of the first deputy to the president and the ministers of roads and transport and construction jihad.

This freeway will be built at a cost of 200 billion rials [R], a length of 240 km, and a width of 33 meters, from Kashan towards Esfahan and the Mobarakeh Steel Complex.

This project will be implemented from the beginning of 1374 to 1378 [21 March 1995-20 March 2000], with investments by the private sector and a percentage of government aid.

After operation of this freeway begoms, the investing company will gain economic benefit through the collection of legal tolls.

This freeway will connect the roads west and east of Esfahan to the national network of roads.

In the ceremonies held on this occasion at the Esfahan-Tehran road police station, located 25 km northwest of Esfahan, Ayatollah Taheri, the representative of the religious guardian and Friday imam, and two deputies of the people of Esfahan in the Majles, as well as political and executive officials of the province were present.

In these ceremonies, Dr. Hasan Habibi called this project one of the greatest works of the reconstruction period.

The first deputy to the president also emphasized the importance of upkeep and maintenance of the roads.

*Six Satellite TV Stations To Begin in Yazd

95LA0061B Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 26 Nov 94 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Simultaneous with Basij Week, six new satellite television transmission stations were put into operation at a cost of 1.2 billion rials [R].

The general manager of the Voice and Vision of Yazd said on Wednesday [23 November]: With the operation of these centers, 99.5 percent of this province's population of 715,000 will receive the programs of the First Network, of the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Kiyumars Tuti added: These stations, with 200 watts of power each, were built in the Esfij area in Behabad district, Dulab in Khezrabad district, Qotrom in the Central district of Bafq, Hanza in the city of Mehriz, Moghestan in the district of Kharanaq, and Hajjiabad in the Central district of the city of Yazd.

He said: With the operation of these stations, the transmission of television programs was strengthened, for about 30,000 of the residents of those regions.

Tuti added: At present, the Second and Third Networks of the Vision broadcast for 78 percent and 53 percent of the population of Yazd province, respectively.

He projected: By the end of 1374 [20 March 1996], the total population of Yazd province will receive the programs of the Second and Third networks of the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

*Four Centers Added to Telephone Network

95LA0061A Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 24 Nov 94 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Four new telephone centers were added to the automatic telephone network of the country.

According to a report by the Public Relations Office of the Iranian Communications Company, these four centers are "Dokalleh Marz of Rudposht," a suburb of the city of Babol, with the intercity code 1258; "Shabab," a suburb of the city of Ilam, with the intercity code 8428; "Seyd Nazari," a suburb of the city of Ilam, with intercity code 8429; and "Zanjireh-ye Olya," a suburb of the city of Ilam, with the intercity code of 8469.

With the operation of these communications projects, the customers of these centers will be able to establish direct telephone contact with other areas of Islamic Iran.

*Telephone Numbers Given to NW Tehran Citizens

95LA0061D Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 26 Nov 94 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] In the new development of the Ayatollah Kashani Telephone Center in northwest Tehran, 20,000 telephones with prefix numbers of 608 and 609 were given to applicants.

The previous prefix numbers of this center had been changed some time ago from 94 to 607.

In the new development of the Tehran communications network, 1 million new telephones have been given to those holding previous receipts and are being sold, of which so far 340,000 have been transferred.

*RESALAT Report on 13 Dec 94 Majles Session

95LA0076a Tehran RESALAT in Persian 14 Dec 94 pp 12, 13

[FBIS Translated Text] [Boxed item]**Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division: The Majles held an open session yesterday with Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri presiding, and deputies from the cities of Bam, Maragheh, Marand, and Shiraz made pre-agenda speeches. Then the speaker of the Majles made a speech in which he condemned the recent position of the British parliamentary deputies. Then the Majles went into session. We call to your attention the detailed discussions.**[end boxed item]

Majid Dabestani, Deputy From Bam

Dabestani was the first pre-agenda speaker of the open session of the Majles yesterday, who said: Fortunately, with the elimination and disintegration of the heathen Eastern pole and the blow due to the manifestation of religion as the undeniable liberating ideology, Islam after the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran and in the continuation of its historic life has become a strong pole.

Referring to the cultural propaganda of the West, the speaker pointed out: They are trying to make the people conform to their own social culture and behavioral models. For this reason, in order to eliminate the opportunity for thought and action from every member of the nations, particularly the young, they propagate the culture of futility, obscurity, and debauchery among them.

If every individual and group is to consider himself or itself independent and see the country on one side and himself or itself on the other, he might consider that the country owes him. But if we consider ourselves a part of this country and are comprehensive in our view, taking the interests of the country and those of the future into consideration, certainly we can all take effective steps in cooperation and harmony.

In continuation, the deputy from Bam pointed out: During the period of reconstruction and repairing the destruction left from the past, which can certainly be called the most difficult stage of the revolution, the role of the Majles becomes more sensitive, and the expectations of the people regarding the legislative institution increases.

He mentioned wise dealings with regard to the cultural issues of the society to be among the people's expectations of the Majles and said: By the grace of God, today our country, in terms of political strategy, has strong, stable policies. Even though the perspective of the economic policies is nothing more than independence in economic policies and self-reliance, the change in the regulations and laws has made the economic movements of the country very vulnerable.

He continued: Based on statistics and figures, the volume of imports in the country in the area of essential needs has decreased significantly in the past few years, while with some items, such as steel, we have achieved suitable exports. But all the officials of the regime believe that the continuation of these policies is possible with the actual participation of the people on the production scene

Dabestani emphasized the reform of the administrative structure of the country and, referring to attention to agriculture in the Second Plan, said: We must note that reliance on industrial development alone is not enough to achieve economic development, as we have seen so far. Agricultural development is the economic foundation of the country.

The deputy from Bam then in continuation emphasized the role and place of tourism in the cultural programs of the country.

Seyyed Mostafa Seyyed-Hashemi, Deputy From Maragheh

The next speaker was Seyyed-Hashemi from Maragheh, who referred to the action of the scholars of the world and alert torch bearers and the beloved revolutionary people in raising, accepting, and presenting the grand leader as the source of emulation, referred to the heinous action of the criminal United States in publishing a stamp on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and said: The United States shatters the sanctity of humanity by heinously concealing the beautiful face of peace, truthfulness, and brotherhood.

He added: On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the barbaric U.S. atomic attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it has published a stamp called the atomic mushroom with the following caption, "The atomic bomb brought the war to an end more rapidly."

The speaker emphasized: I condemn this clear impudence and violation of human rights and the oppression of 300,000 people who were killed as a result of this attack and hope that the free thinkers of the world and the politicians of Japan recognize their main enemy and the enemy of humanity.

Seyyed Hashemi continued: How is it that when dear Iran publishes their stamp commemorating the capture of the Spy Nest, the United States returns all the postal parcels, but it engages in this anti-world-peace action itself?

Then, addressing the [Ministry of] Finance assessors, the deputy from Maragheh said: The collection of one rial in illegal taxes is religiously prohibited and violates the rights of the people. They should not be collected for the Treasury. Care must be taken that the method does not make the weak weaker by paying unjust taxes and the rich richer by not paying actual taxes. They should not cause public discontent.

In continuation, he added: I hope the implementation of the order of the deputy minister for tax affairs of the above-mentioned ministry concerning the collection of taxes from the Maragheh businesses and guilds is such that, while observing social justice, it eliminates the climate of discontent and the tax sheet of 1371 [21 March 1992-20 March 1993] does not show a 300 percent increase compared to last year's taxes.

In conclusion, the speaker made reminders concerning his constituency.

Ebrahim Sarraf, Deputy From Marand

The next speaker was Sarraf from Marand, who thanked the first deputy of the president and the governor of Marand for opening the Tabriz Kaf factories and building the Marand Governor's Office.

Karim Zare', Deputy From Shiraz

The last pre-agenda speaker was Zare' from Shiraz, who offered his congratulations on the birthday of his holiness 'Ali and, condemning the slaughter of Muslims by the Serbs, said: In order to acquire new technology, in addition to training experienced college graduates, special attention must be paid in the budget of future years to the living conditions of professors and members of the faculty of universities.

In continuation, he added: The Majles must take the necessary steps to prevent and decrease the dangers of earthquakes that are inevitable and ratify the necessary laws in this connection.

In continuation, he asked the deputies to pay more attention in the 1374 [21 March 1995-20 March 1996] budget to the vulnerable strata. Also, he asked the ministers of petroleum, energy, and commerce and the director of the Plan and Budget Organization for the development of Shiraz Refinery, attention to the electrification of the city of Shiraz, feeding the students, and allocating the necessary funds for building an athletic center and a covered pool in Shiraz.

Ratifications

The first item on the agenda of the open session of the Majles yesterday was the presentation of the 1374 national budget by Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the Majles, the text of which was read by him. Part of this report was published in yesterday's issue. The continuation follows.

In continuing his report to the Majles, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said in regards to judicial issues: Other policies noted in the 1374 budget of this section include implementation of the law on general and revolution courts in selected judicial districts, replacement of the collection of cash fines and carrying out social services in place of incarceration, the creation of production units to develop technical and vocational training of prisoners, attention to judicial aid, and actions related to crime prevention.

In regards to the preservation of internal order and security, by allocating funds and carrying out needed investments, the government has been able to achieve a significant decrease in important indexes, such as accidents, the number of deaths due to them, the number of thefts, the level of entry of narcotics, and smuggling.

He added: In 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], with the creation of 88 km of canals, the creation of 170 km of embankments, the closure of important straits, and the creation of physical obstacles in the border regions, the activity of smuggling caravans has been prevented.

In continuation, he said: Among the goals and policies devised in the budget of next year, increase in the security coefficient throughout the country, the start of new law enforcement units, the coordination and standardization of the communication system of the law enforcement forces, the providing of advanced technical equipment along the borders and arteries, and finally the promotion of indirect methods of control of law enforcement, especially in traffic and transportation, can be mentioned.

In regards to foreign policy in 1374, the president said: Preserving and expanding relations in various dimensions and safeguarding them from global propaganda conspiracies in foreign relations with the goal of pursuing the material and spiritual interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the interests of the Islamic world, within the framework of bilateral, regional, and international cooperation that is sometimes accompanied with aggressive and defensive methods on various levels of relations with countries and power blocs, have been among the important actions regarding foreign policy this year that exist as a major index in next year's foreign policy plan of the country.

Next year, efforts will be made in regional and international dimensions to create and strengthen Islamic, regional, and international organizations and cooperation. Also, new meetings been projected for next year, such as the eighth Assembly of the Leaders of the Islamic Conference Organization, the holding of which in Tehran requires coordination, cooperation, and various sessions in order to bring the viewpoints closer to one another in regards to common issues and goals.

Then, referring to the reform of the administrative system, Mr. Hashemi said: The examination and study of larger government organizations, carrying out organizational reform in a number of government organizations, reform of the implemental methods in some government agencies and organizations, and finally planning for the training of managers and long-term and short-term training courses for employees are among the most important actions that have taken place to reform government organizations.

Explaining the agricultural programs in 1374 concerning water resources, he said: This year, the Saveh and 15 Khordad dams reached the stage of being filled and began operation. By the end of the year, the Barun dam is also scheduled to be filled. Also, the repair operations for the Martyr 'Abbaspur dam, which is a most sensitive task in dam construction engineering, will be completed.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani announced the industrial projects that will reach operation in 1374 as follows: Grey cement, three units with a capacity of 1.5 million tons annually; cheese manufacturing, six units with a capacity of 30,000 tons; fruit concentrate, four units with a capacity of 9,000 tons; baby food, three units with a capacity of 15,000 tons; pharmaceutical raw materials, two units with a capacity of 9,000 tons; and motorcycles with gears, one unit with a capacity of 15,000 units.

He added: Next year, about 290,000 residential units in the form of subsidized housing and social housing with the use of government aid funds and investments by the people will be under construction.

In order to help provide housing for about 500,000 married employees who lack housing it is projected to grant special banking loans to 100,000 employee families through helping the Housing Bank resources and using employee savings.

In regards to roads and transport, the president said: In 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], in connection with the expansion of the road network in the country, 10,453 km of freeways, highways, main roads, and secondary roads are underway, and it is projected that by the end of the year, about 1,135 km will be completed.

He also added: In order to develop the communication network, this year the necessary steps were taken by the nongovernment sector to offer services, and in 1374, the portable telephone network and other communication services in several countries will be carried out by the nongovernment sector.

In conclusion, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani explained the characteristics of the 1374 budget and said:

The 1374 national budget has been estimated to be 95,269.4 billion rials [R], which compared to the budget of 1373 shows an increase of 36.5 percent.

The equivalent of R41,415.7 billion of the national budget funds is the general government budget, which indicates an increase of 37.8 percent compared to the ratified figure this year. The special revenues of next year's budget also has been estimated at R3,760.6 billion, which shows an increase of 66.8 percent compared to 1373.

The budget of government companies, for-profit institutions affiliated with the government, and banks, with a 42-percent increase compared to the ratified figure this year, has been estimated at R64,585 billion. Of this amount, R57,729 billion is for the for-profit institutions affiliated with the government, and R5,603 billion is related to the banks.

Very Urgent Status of the Proposal To Examine the Annual Budget Bill

The second item on the Majles agenda was amending the internal bylaws in regards to the examination of the annual budget bill, which was discussed as very urgent. Explaining this proposal, Dr. Shahrzad said: We must consider the Planning and Budget Committee an acceptable headquarters and decision-making center for the deputies, and its members must be elected in the open session of the Majles by the deputies.

Then he did not consider useful the budget bill going through two rounds of discussion.

After the opposing and supporting speeches, the very urgent status was put to a vote, was not ratified, and was rejected.

On the Margins of the Majles

The Central Bank and Not Opening Credit

It is reported that the Central Bank does not provide the necessary cooperation in regards to opening credit for the import of essential goods. In this connection, Engineer Yusefpur said: Considering the problems that were created with regard to the procurement and supply of essential goods last Shahrivar [23 August-22 September], the director of the Central Bank promised in the Commerce Committee to facilitate the import of goods. The matter has been pursued, but, according to available information, the Ministry of Commerce still faces problems in this regard. If the situation continues, considering that the month of Ramazan is near, people may face problems. In order to prevent this problem, in a question posed to the minister of commerce and the director general of the Central Bank, they have been invited to come before the Commerce Committee to explain the process of opening credit for goods and when the needed goods will enter the country.

Question of the Deputy of Shahriar to the Minister of Interior

The question of Qashqavi, the deputy from Shahriar, to the minister of interior concerning the reason for the delay in the implementation of the law amending the city limits of Tehran was referred to the Councils and Internal Affairs Committee.

In this connection, he told our correspondent: The inquiry proposal to change the city limits of Tehran after ratification by the Majles was announced to the Ministry of Interior on 30 Mehr this year [22 October 1994] by the president. In a meeting that I had with Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the president emphasized the implementation of this law. But the Ministry of Interior, claiming that the maps must be approved by the Cabinet, refuses to implement the law, whereas the limits of the cities are quite clear and there is no need for new maps. If there is need for new maps, in accordance with Article 99 of the law of city halls, the reform of the boundaries is exclusively within the authority of the minister of interior, and referring this issue to the Cabinet is contrary to the regulations. If the Ministry of Interior and the Tehran City Hall have contrary expert viewpoints concerning this law, it is not a good innovation to refuse to implement the law.

Pakistan

'News Analysis' Reviews U.S. Ties

BK1001103095 Islamabad THE NATION in English 10 Jan 95 pp 1, 4

["News analysis" by Nasim Zahra: "Pak-US Ties: Islamabad's Tight-Rope Walking"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—Stating the reason for Defence Secretary William Perry's four-country tour the January 5 USIS Press candidly maintained that "the purpose of the trip was to strengthen defence relationships." In his first trip to the region Perry hopes to not only familiarize himself with his counterparts but more importantly strike some common approaches on critical issues about 'stability' and 'security' in areas including the Middle East and South and Central Asia.

While Israel and Egypt continue to be seen in Washington as two outposts of US interests in the Middle East the emphasis on defence cooperation between Washington and the South Asian states is indicative of Washington's renewed quest for defence cooperation with perhaps more willing partners. Israel and Egypt remain the largest recipients of American foreign aid, $3 billion annually between the two. India's aid level has been minimal while Pakistan's aid package got slashed courtesy the discriminatory Pressler Amendment.

What has prompted renewed US interests in South Asia and especially in Pakistan on the defence level? Mostly the reasons that have remained operative from the fifties through the eighties plus the fear of nuclear proliferation courtesy Pakistan and even worse fear of an Indo-Pak nuclear war. Like in the past Washington continues to seek a 'nativized front force' for tackling what it considers security threats in the South, West and Central Asia.

As the region continues to go through internal and inter-state political turmoil Washington view its partnership with Pakistan's military establishment on the 'old' level. Washington continues to see the Pakistan military establishment as possibly a useful partner to play a 'stabilising' role in the region. While the American perception of the threat remains clear—countries like Iran, Libya etc and the substate forces of 'militant Islam'—it would be premature to conclude that Washington has devised a clear-cut strategy and thus a clear-cut role for Pakistan in its military strategy in the region, especially South and Central Asian. At this juncture defence cooperation is likely to involve joint exercises, docking facilities, Pakistan providing logistical support to its CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command] forces, etc.

What is clear however, is that Washington despite all its talk of disarmament and denuclearisation views the role of overwhelming force as a central factor in promoting its economic and defence interests in the regions. In the past Pakistan entered into active security cooperation with the Saudis and other pro-American Gulf states as part of the American designs in the region. In the process of course these links yielded some material benefits to the Pakistan armed forces and also to the country.

This force-driven brand of US foreign policy extends to other regions beyond the Middle East. In the Gulf Washington is deeply involved in the defence set-up. American military strategists firmly believe that the "key" to its 'successful' policy against Iraq was its "ability to put armoured troops and combat aircraft quickly into the Gulf region." Addressing a seminar organised by the Washington-based Middle East Policy Council, Secretary Perry declared that the US was "poised to place more than 150,000 military personnel into the region." Washington has already carved out for itself, with support of the Gulf regimes, a major role in the security structure of the Gulf region.

Significantly this force factor is unlikely to change even if with the change of guard in the American Congress. As the Republicans take control of the Congress the force factor may receive further impetus. A US foreign policy analyst at the American think tank Heritage Foundation Lawrence T. DiRita points out that the Republicans "will help the White House along by advancing a doctrine espoused by former defence Secretary Casper Weinberger: have clear objectives, use overwhelming force." (INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Jan. 7).

On another level Washington somewhat buoyed by its "successful policy," in the Middle East since the Henry Kissinger days is keen for a 'replay' in South Asia. For the last half a decade over the nuclear issue and the Kashmir issue the pressure has been on to the make peace with India despite Kashmir, give up supporting the Kashmiris in the Valley and unilaterally give up the nuclear option. Now on the nuclear issue Washington is not expecting unilateral moves from Pakistan and yet it hopes that through Washington's 'guidance' a Camp David can be brokered in South Asia. It sees a solution to the nuclear issue and the Kashmir issue only within this context.

Against these American policy objectives Islamabad has some tough thinking to do. It is essentially within this larger goal of promoting 'peace' and American economic interests that Washington seeks deeper defence ties with Islamabad.

What critical is also the fact that Washington's entire foreign policy outlook in the region is geared towards promoting mainly its commercial interests in the region. Other prerequisites, as Washington sees them, for promoting its commercial interests are i) political 'stability', ii) promotion of regional economic as well as defence blocs and iii) sustainable bilateral partnerships must combine economic interests with defence interest as it has done with Japan and South Korea in Asia.

Like in the past Islamabad's and Washington's defence establishments are locked into different threat perceptions. The question for Islamabad remains: What is it that Islamabad will specifically gain from greater defence cooperation with the Americans? Genuine security including release of the F-16s PC-3 Orion surveillance aircraft and other defence equipment for which reportedly $1.3 billion have already been paid? Will the Pressler legislation be lifted? Will there be total parity on the nuclear issue between India, Israel and Pakistan? Will Washington be as committed to the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions as it is about the resolutions on Iraq? Will it understand Islamabad's anxiety about the Israeli-Indian defence connection? Will Washington refuse to supply advanced conventional weapons and dual purpose technology to the Indians to prevent further imbalance in India's favour in conventional weapons?

These are the relevant questions for Pakistani policy makers as they meet with the American Secretary of Defence. The rest is 'fluff' for Pakistan. It is not sufficient to rejoice as the Foreign Minister seems to do in his January 6 article that "the US has declared that it considers Pakistan a strategically vital and economically promising country." The question for Pakistan should be the reverse. How is Washington strategically important and useful for Pakistan? Otherwise tragically we are still seeking to be a cog in Washington's wheel of 'stability' that it erects for the region.

Pakistan's policy makers have to deal with hard realities in formulating a policy that truly advances Pakistan's defence and economic interests and internal political [passage indistinct] written assertions included "as the world's largest contributor Pakistan has helped to preserve global stability and save precious human lives. We have led the way in promoting a more active role for the UN in building peace and promoting universal development. Pakistan is seen today as a model for the Islamic and the Third World." (THE NATION, Jan 6).

It is in this same hazy, think mode that senior Pakistan officials advocating deeper defence cooperation with the US argue "America is an important country, we cannot annoy it and think investment will come." Clearly there is no automatic link between pleasing the Americans and investment, aid and national security flowing. The question for Pakistan is cooperation at what cost and to what end. Neither by parading around as a "moderate and Islamic" state will Pakistan be able to promote its economic and security interests nor by solely blaming the 'other' for all our drawbacks. The fact remains that in house political and administrative cleansing will make investment come. Meanwhile with the Americans relations must proceed on strictly cost-benefit analysis political, economic and defence. Not on old outmoded and naive calculations.

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